

REASON.

A N

ESSAY.

B Y

Sir George Mackenzie

Late Lord Advocate of *Scotland*.

L O N D O N,

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For the Honourable
ROBERT BOYL, Esquire.

I Know nothing (Sir,) more inconsistent with right Reason, or which deserves more to be Reform'd amongst Learned men, than their way of Dedicating Books: And that we may the better understand what ought to be done in this Age, let us look back into what was done by the Antients.

The Poets did indeed invoke their Gods or the Muses in the beginning of their Works, but that was rather to obtain their assistance, than to bestow upon them Panegyricks; but their praising the Gods was a safe Subject in which they could not exceed: And therefore, though these Invocations were the first occasion of writing Dedications to Mortals, yet Flattery in this made them mistake their Model so far, that at last some of the Poets did likewise invoke the Assistance of their
A Emperours,

*Emperours, as if they had been Gods
as well as Patrons.*

*Others of the Poets did very anti-
ently Dedicate their Works to Men
also, as Hesiod who was older than
Homer, dedicates or rather addresses
his first Poem to Perſes; but 'tis very
observable, that he and others in ſuch
like Addreſſes, rather excite the Per-
ſons to whom they addreſſ to Vertue
and Glory, than magnify them for ha-
ving attain'd to the perfection of ei-
ther or both. Yet ſome of theſe Poets
have left us Dedications ſo excellent,
that they are as little to be imitated as
cenſur'd, ſuch as :*

Hor. Epiſt. 1. Lib. 2.

*Cum tot ſuſtineas & tanta Negocia ſolus :
Res Italas Armis tuteris : moribus ornes :
Legibus emendes : in publica Commoda peccem,
Si longo Sermone morer tua tempora, Cæſar.*

*And others of them, ſuch as Virgil,
end their Poems with very decent and
delicate Complements, as that which
cloſes the 4th Book of his Georgicks,*

*Hæc ſuper arborum cultu pecorumq; canebunt,
Et ſuper arboribus : Cæſar dum magnus ad altum
Fulminat Euphratem bello, Victoꝝq; volentes
Per populos dat Jura, viamq; aſſecrat Olympo.*

which

which exceed, in my humble Opinion,
the fam'd and large Dedications of
Grotius and Caufabon.

It was usual amongst the modest An-
tients to address their Books to such
as they thought able to correct them,
seeking rather Advice than Patronage:
And thus Plutarch tells us in the
Life of Lucullus, That Scylla ha-
ving wrote an History, sent it to Lu-
cullus to be corrected; and ^{μεγαλυνε}
the Greek word used there,
seems to me to import only adlocutio.
And I think that the Antients have
found Protection and Patronage even
in those Addresses wherein Advice
was sought for; who durst have cen-
sur'd as Tully observes, what Brutus
or Pomponius Atticus approved?

Some also prefix modest Prefaces,
wherein they acknowledged the Fa-
vours done them, and told the occasion
of their Writing, as Virtruvius to Au-
gustus; others did thereafter in imi-
tation of the Writers of Tragedies
and Comedies, address themselves in
a Prologue, as Valerius Maximus to
A 2 Tiberius;

Tiberius; and this I think he did to give his Fancy scope, as a Poet, to praise with the Latitude that Poets take; for that is the first Debauch I find committed of this kind, for he could not have said greater things to a worse Man.

To shun which Excess, some gave to their Books the Names of the Muses, as Herodotus; or of men of great Merit, as Plato did in his Socrates, or Tully in Lælius, &c. or else omitted all Addresses, as Thucidides, Livy, Salust, or at most extended not their Addresses beyond a mere Compellation, such as that in St. Luke to Theophilus, by which possibly may be meant any Christian under this appellative Name, rather than a particular Patron or Friend, as some Books are now addressed to the Christian Reader, in imitation it may be of him; for 'tis observable that the Church-men imitated this Κράτιστε Θεόφιλε, of St. Luke, and thus Origen dedicates his Book against Celsus, with this Compellation, φιλόστοργε Ἀμβρόσιε: And Eusebius names his Patron Θεόδοτε φίλε Θεῷ. At

At last the word Dedication was brought in by Flattery, and Books were dedicated to Men in imitation of their dedicating Temples, Statues, and other things to the Gods; nor did this extravagant way of excessive praising ever appear till the World was under Tiberius corrupted in all its Morals. This depraved Custom was also much heightened by the Panegyricks, made by Pliny to Trajan, and by Eusebius to the Great Constantine, who thought that they might more justly praise the good than others might impious Emperours, tho' I am afraid the Eloquence which charms us in those two Discourses, shall never be able to account for the ill Example they have given.

My design in all this is to shew, That we can as little justify our Flattery by the Practice of the Antients as by the Principles of Reason, by which they always regulated their Eloquence; And therefore it seems to me, that Dedications should be brought back to the antient Model, either of a naked Compellation which satisfies abundantly
Friend-

Friendship, or of acknowledging Favours which satisfies gratitude, or of exciting the persons to whom we write to deserve those praises which are now most unjustly bestow'd upon them which is a Christian Duty. And I cannot but observe three very ill Consequences which arise naturally and necessarily from our late Dedications; the first is That they learn men to lye and flatter and Custom hath almost legitimated this Crime, and made it a Duty. Secondly, They have poison'd the very Fountains of Truth so far, that Posterity can hardly distinguish betwixt those who have deserv'd well or ill. Flattery thinking always fit to supply by its excessive praises, what is wanting in due merit; and therefore by how much their Patrons deserve ill, they praise so much the more, and the only mark of Vertue in an Author or Merit in a Patron now is, that there is no extraordinary thing said in any Address to the one by the other; for who can believe an Author speaks truth in his Book, who lyes and flatters in it

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its very beginning; or that a Patron
has any modesty or common sense, who
suffers himself to be so imposed upon?
If the Patron believe what the Au-
thor says, he must be a fool; and if he
believes him not, he must think the
Author one; and since they who lye im-
probably, are thought fools in all things
else, why not in this too, in which they
exceed the most Romantick Travel-
lers, for they only would impose on us
in things which we know not, but these
in things wherein we cannot but disco-
ver them? and I wonder why they do
not as well praise the French King for
having found out America, or for ha-
ving vanquish't Alexander the Great,
as for those things which they of late
ascribe to him in their Dedications.
Thirdly, Our late Dedications have
really corrupted the Eloquence of the
Age; for whereas the true Ornaments
of Eloquence are to be natural and de-
cent in expressing our Thoughts, these
Dedications have blown our style into
a Tympany, and have ruined it's natu-
ral Beauty by fulsome and ill placed
dand-

Δοκῆι δὲ ὑπε-
ρβόλῃς πρὸς γα-
ργέναι ποσῶν
τα γέν βιβλία
γράφας, ἵδε-
νι τῷ βασιλέ-
ων περσεφώνη-
σε.

daubing Paints : Which
made Chrysippus, as
Laertius tells us, de-
cry all Dedication
to Kings and Princes
lest they should entice
men to Flattery ; but
this were to run from

one Excess to another.

I Design, Sir, nothing in this Es-
say, but to hold out a Lanthorn to those
who are ready to split on a Rock ; and
I wish rather that this may be one of
the Works that may follow me,
than one of those that may bring
me Reputation : And I send this
to you as Lucullus did to Scylla
for Correction ; or as Cicero did
to Atticus, as a token of our Friend-
ship, and of my just esteem of your
Piety and Learning.

G. M.

P A R T I.

*How weakly Men reason in
matters of greatest Impor-
tance.*

IT may seem a bold Undertaking in any man to own right Reason in this Age, it being the declared Enemy of our interests and inclinations, for it may possibly excite man to reflect upon what the World and himself does, and so inspire him with thoughts contrary to those which are generally received, and that is the only unpardonable Error. It may likewise seem ridiculous to think, that there is any common Standard of Reason amongst

mongst men, since that charm
 in one Country, which is abhor-
 red in others, and the very ima-
 ginary lines which divide King-
 doms, seem likewise to divide their
 way of thinking, and to make a
 different Geography in the Reason
 which they adore, as well as in
 the Earth on which they tram-
 ple; every Age of the World has
 almost had a different way of rea-
 soning, and every Age in Man
 suggests to him contrary thoughts,
 in the present he condemns what
 himself formerly admir'd: So lit-
 tle influence has it upon the best
 refin'd Judicatures and assemblies
 that the most infallible Church-
 men, the most learned Judges
 and the most zealous Patriots must
 trust to Voting, because they can-
 not to Reasoning, and they are
 by this likewise so often misled
 that it may be expected men will
 one day agree to decide matters
 by the fewest Votes, as the wisest
 have

arms have always told us, that Votes
 bhor- are rather to be weighed, than
 ima- numbred. It has often grieved
 King- me, that men could guess the
 their decision and determination of any
 take a point to be debated, before they
 reason heard the Reasons to be produced
 as in upon either side, and to hear them
 tram- laugh at such as trusted to the
 d has solidity of the Reasons they were
 f rea- to produce, being fully convinced
 Man that the point would be determi-
 ghts, ned by Interest, and not by Rea-
 what son. The *Inka* of *Peru* was much
 So lit- in the right, when he regreted,
 e best that his Predecessors had not obli-
 gies, ged him to worship a reasonable
 urch- Man; yet his choice in this had
 dges, been unsuccessful; for it would
 s must have been as hard to have found
 y can- him, except he had believed his
 ey are Priest, who had undoubtedly told
 nished, him he was the man. And tho' I
 n will believe not that French Physician
 matters who assures us, he found in his
 wiser Travels a Nation that differed al-
 have

together from us in our way of reasoning, as if God design'd to shew Mankind that his Omnipotency is not tyed in this to any known measures ; yet I see, even amongst our selves, that Convenience (the gentler name of Avarice) Pride, Revenge, Bigotry, Education, and every thing else pass for Reason, except Reason itself, which makes me oft-times cry out, *Is this that nobler Creature formed after the Image of God, for whom Christ dyed, and who is to be Co-heir with him of his everlasting Kingdoms.* All which notwithstanding it is undeniably true, that there is something in man more sublime than can be ascribed to flesh and blood, that dull matter could never inspire him with these penetrating, subtil, comprehensive, generous, and elevated thoughts which made the Pagans believe that his Soul was *particula Divinae Naturæ*, a parcel of that same Divine

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vine Substance of which the Gods
 were formed, and that men so
 qualified were demi-Gods, and
 God Almighty himself has by a
 surer Revelation revealed to us,
 that this Noble Soul was formed
 after his Image, and it was most
 consequential that God who is in-
 finite, being to communicate him-
 self to some of his Creatures, to
 the end his Greatness and Good-
 ness might be known to them, he
 should in order to this breathe in-
 to them somewhat that might
 comprehend, at least, some Ideas
 of that infinite Perfection ; and
 therefore it was necessary that the
 Soul should be an image of what
 was infinite, and that we might
 understand this from some exte-
 rior and sensible representations
 and things, he has formed his very
 body (the Casket wherein that
 Noble Jewel is kept) after a very
 wonderful manner, thus by small
 and interceptible Rays darted in-

to his Eye, the representations of the vast Hemisphere, are imprinted so on that little Tablet, that it seems as great and distinct there, as in the Original; all he ever heard is laid up in his memory, as distinctly as Papers in a Cabinet. And almost by the same motion of the Tongue; or at least, without any studied variation, vast numbers of delicate words, or harmonious sounds, do, in a way unknown, and unperceptible by Flesh and Blood, fall out in mighty Swarms and Armies, which passing thus undiscovered, through the Air, enter at many thousand Ears in the same Figure, Ranks, and Files, wherein they were at first spoke; and there, in a Spiritual way, they charm some, and enrage others; they animate some, and discourage others; working almost as great varieties as they bring.

Divine

Divine Wisdom also foreseeing that Interest would perswade men to pull all to pieces, whilst each drew all to himself, he imprest upon this Soul common Principles, which even those must reverence who neglect them, and therefore they err, not in the rule, but in the application, and cheat themselves by Subterfuges, the recurring to which infers necessarily, that these Principles are submitted to by the most stubborn, and somewhat respected by the wildest in sublunary matters; and yet in what concerns our immortal Souls, and eternal state, we are more negligent, as will appear too clearly by these following Particulars which I have classed according to their different inferences.

I have oft-times admir'd to see men busied about nothing, save external and sensual Objects; but it is yet stranger to find, that amongst such as are convinc'd, that

Knowledge is as much to be prefer'd to all other things, as the Soul is to the Body ; there are yet some so sensual, even in this point, that the knowledge they seek after is but a meer delicate sensuality. Mathematicians consider chiefly how to measure Bodies, Physicians how to know and cure men, as Souldiers do how to destroy them. But the study of Christian Morality (which has for its Object the Soul of Man heightned by the Christian Religion, teaching him how to understand the duty of that Soul to God) is too much neglected, as a thing obvious and ealie: Whereas when our Saviour came into the World, he neither taught Mathematicks, Medicine, nor Physiology, tho' all these were much considered in that Age wherein he assum'd our Nature ; and he could have made himself as much admir'd by clearing mysterious doubts

doubts in these, as by working Miracles; but he passing by all these as less useful Notions, and such as too frequently divert and distract, rather than inform; he declares he was come to make Man happy, and begins his Ministry by an admirable Sermon on the Mount, whereby, in order to the making him happy, he teaches him to reason rightly upon his duty to God and Men: and it is strange, that we should think dull matter is able to afford more noble Contemplations, than that subtle, that sublime, that vast, and that nimble Soul, which retains so far the Image of its Maker, as to be inscrutable in all its faculties: and Oh what wonderful Springs and Motions, what various windings and flights, what boundless and new Spheres and Worlds are there in his Reflections, and what things are daily said, and Volumes written on the
Love

Love to Women, which is but the excursion of one of them. Our diseases cannot conceal themselves being tyed to matter, but the diseases of our immortal Souls are so concealed by self-love, which loves to cover its own imperfections, and to hide its own retreats, that they are past finding out; and if a little Microscope can discover to the Eye new and strange things in Objects that have been daily seen, without being considered for many Ages; what wonderful discoveries may serious thinking men make in so immense an Object that has been so much neglected? especially since the thoughts of Man to change and vary themselves into as many shapes, and give themselves as many colours as they please: and every Duty or Errour is really a different Object as they are in conjunction with, or in opposition to one another; whereas all other
Objects

Objects are incapable of such Variations either from themselves or others: And tho' God has design'd to be known in his Works, yet he seems on purpose to have made the knowledge of them so unsearchable to Natural Philosophers, and the success so little able to reward or honour their Endeavours, to the end they might the more relish Moral Philosophy, which is then only uncertain when like the other it grows more a Science than a Duty.

In my reasoning I will use the Forms prescrib'd by God himself in his holy Scriptures; wherein when he would convince man of his Folly, Sin, or Ingratitude, he argues with him from his own concessions, in these cases, or his own practice, on all other occasions: As for instance, when he sends *Nathan* to *David*, he asks him what the Man deserv'd, who having great Herds and Flocks
of

of his own, took a poor Man's Lamb out of his Bosom? And *David*, having in great anger sworn that he should die, *Nathan* then tells him, it was his case, and condemns him from his own mouth: And God says to his People, who acknowledg'd him to be their Lord and Father, but walk'd not suitably to their acknowledgment. *If I be a Father, where is mine Honour, and if I be a Master, where is my Fear?* Malach. 1.6. He calls to them. *Isai.* 1. 18. Come, let us reason together; and admiring the unreasonableness of unthinking Man, he appeals to the Heavens and Earth, *Hear, O Heavens, and give ear, O Earth, for the Lord hath spoken! I have nourished and brought up Children, and they have rebelled against me! The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Masters Crib: But Israel doth not know, my People*
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do not consider! And in the several Gospels we find our blessed Saviour, after the same manner, confuting the *Jews*, and convincing all his Hearers. Nor do I find so much delicate reasoning in any of those Books, highly esteem'd by our Men of Sense, who slight too much that admirable one, which God himself owns as his sacred Word: And I admire our Saviour, as much for his Reasonings as for his Miracles. Thus when he would convince Men of the folly of caring immoderately for the things of this World, he asks them, What profit shall it be to gain all the World, that soon perishes, if they lose their own Soul, which is Immortal? *And which of you, (says our Lord) by taking thought, can add one cubit to his stature?* And urges them, not to fear want, because, if they who are sinful know how to provide
for

for their own Families, how much more shall your Father, which is in Heaven, know how to provide for you, if ye be his Children? *Behold,* (says our blessed Maker) *the Fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them; are not you much better than they?*

For establishing this my Position, it is fit to consider, that such as are reasonable, endeavour to shew it in the greatest concerns; and it implies a want, or weakness of Reason, to be exact and delicate in inconsiderable and silly things, and yet to err and be careless in matters of greatest consequence: And who would not laugh at an Ambassadour or a General, who would value himself upon his Dancing or Playing upon the Lute, bestowing upon these Exercises the time due to his King, Country, and

and Negotiations ; which makes me admire, why in this foolish Age, we call these Men of good Senses, and strong Spirits, who can criticise *Virgil, Juvenal, Livie, Tacitus*, or it may be, understand the Mathematicks, or Conversation ; whilst we are convinc'd, that albeit they believe there is a God, yet they mind him not, and care less for their Souls than they do for any of their ordinary recreations, tho' they are forc'd to tremble at its ill condition, when they begin to consider it.

One of the things which prompted me to write this Book, was the reading of a *French* Treatise, *De la Justesse*, wherein tho' he made me expect great matters, by promising to learn us to think justly ; yet it only taught how to chuse true Epithets, or understand Criticisms, and such trivial knacks : But, alas,

alas, it is more to be regreted,
 that Men should have the sense
 to laugh at others, for not ha-
 ving considered the Plot and de-
 sign of their Plays ; whil'st ma-
 ny who pass for refin'd Wits,
 want one in their whole life ;
 and where the want of it is not
 only a greater shame, but is of
 greater danger, since a Man can-
 not err here without being rui-
 ned to all eternity : And one of
 these great Wits , without a
 solid design in his life, appears
 to me, like a glorious, first-rate
 Ship , magnificently equipp'd,
 richly gilded, and abundantly
 provided of all necessaries ; but
 because it wants a Rudder, and
 a skilful Pilot, fluctuating in a
 great Storm , and near a dan-
 gerous Shore, on which it is dri-
 ven with violence, threaten'd by
 the Wind, and overflown by the
 Billows ; sometimes shatter'd by
 one Rock, and sometimes by a-
 nother,

nother, till at last it sinks down irrecoverably into an unfathomable and dreadful Abyfs. Whether then is the Owner of this Ship, who looks on unconcernedly, and perhaps, would not leave his Whore, Game, or Supper; or that Poet, who wrote his Play without a Plot, most to be contemn'd? Yet he who has no design to save his immortal Soul from endless torments, is a much greater Fool than either; which recommends to me the sense of a Wiser, tho' a Heathen Poet, on this subject, and which I wish the whole Tribe would seriously consider.

*Discite, o miseri, & causas cognoscite rerum,
Quid sumus, & quidnam victuri gignimur, ordo.
Quis datus, aut meta quam mollis flexus & unde.
Quis modus argento, quid fas optare, quid asper.
Utile nummus habet: patriæ carisque propinquis
Quantum elargiri deceat: quem te Deus esse
Jussit & humana qua parte locatus es in re.*

It is a pleasant thing to hear
us

us admire Men, for considering exactly the Anatomy, Specialities, and Natures of Fishes, Fowls, Flies, and other Insects; and yet never consider whence themselves came, whither they are going, or what is there Duty whilst they remain here. And I wonder why we should think it just, to look upon Men in *Bedlam*, tho' they be very reasonable in many things, if they be very distracted in any one; as I know one, who seem'd a discreet Person, and could converse most pertinently in every thing, till they spoke of the Moon; but upon hearing that nam'd, fell instantly a staring, and into great extravagancies, believing himself to be Secretary to the Moon: And others will be discreet enough, till you mention the name of such a Man or Woman; and yet we do not conclude such mad and distracted, who,

who, tho' they understand to measure Heaven, never design to enter into it; and who can eloquently convince Men of eternal Torments, and fright them from the wicked course which lead to these, and yet ruine themselves on the precipices against which they guard others. And who would not think a Physician mad, for all his skill, if after he had made a learned discourse, to prove a liquor to be Poyson, he should drink it off himself; and yet more, if he would not take an Antidote, tho' ready, and which he knew would secure him.

I shall but lightly touch that ridiculous and impudent extravagance of some, who, rather pretending to reason, than having it, take pains to perswade themselves and others, that there is not a God, whilst even the subtilty which they use, when they are endeav-

endeavouring to prove this their Assertion, does necessarily prove his Being: It being impossible, that Matter and Chance, (their great Idols) could forge and polish such subtle notions: And how can they imagine, that since their own little Affairs could not be managed without foresight and conduct, that yet this Great and Glorious Universe, which comprehends so many Millions, such as they, should be so exactly and justly governed, by blind Chance? If there were no Men but the sillie and humorous Asserters of this Opinion, I should be asham'd to bring Man as an instance of the Power and Wisdom of God: Let us then consider this Creature, form'd of I know not what, fed, breathing, and growing in the Womb, we know not how; but from those despicable beginnings, one rises in a short time, to measure the
Heavens,

Heavens, to calculate their Motions, and to imitate their Lightning and Thunder ; another does for his own Glory, form such Models of Religion as seduces, and draws after him Millions of Men, contrary to their former Interests, as well as former Inclinations : A Third, by his Skill, Conduct, and Courage, makes even the remotest Countries of the World to tremble, overturning, and confounding that World, whereof he is so small a part : And a Fourth, by drawing sweetly, and gently together very distant and different reflections, and thoughts, which come readily, as it were upon his call, from their several repositories, forms an Harangue, or a Poem, which pleases or torments the hearers irresistably, as they have commission from their Author ; it being harder to resist them than to make them : Can
so

so regular things be ascrib'd to wild Chance, or such subtil things to dull Matter, which by its Nature, moves necessarily and without choice? The best contriv'd Machine can only repeat but Man chuses his own thoughts and varies or changes them as he pleases.

I desire our Wits to consider that every thing which they see or know, is so marvellously fitted to some use, that as they could not be wanted, so they cannot be contrived better: And it is ridiculous to answer with *Epicurus* (who, tho' he denied Providence yet denied not a Deity) that these things were not made for these uses, as we pretend, but were, in process of time, made use of to these ends by Wit or Necessity. For even Bruits do immediately after they are brought forth, run to those things which they need
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with greater exactness than Man
 could teach them ; and how could
 Men, by Reason, make every
 thing useful, if so infinite a Being
 did not direct and supervise their
 almost infinitely various Necessi-
 ties and Designs, and instruct them,
 by the use of Thinking, (that
 wonderful Engine) to accommo-
 date every thing to its true use.
 The next thing I recommend to
 them, is to consider that all the
 Principles of Justice and Govern-
 ment, without which, the World
 could not subsist, depend upon
 the belief of this infinite Being ;
 for how could I convince a Man
 without this, that it were not
 fit to poyson his Brother for an
 Estate ; or his Prince, when he
 thought that by that he might
 step into his Throne ; which oft-
 times might be done covertly
 enough, to escape the punishment
 of Laws, if they could that of
 Conscience : Nor is it of any force

to tell us, that Politicians have only invented this for their own conveniency, since even this answer presupposes that there is a pre-disposition on the Spirit of Men, to receive and submit to this impression, which is an answerable proof of its truth; and this trick had not been believ'd, had it been only for their own use; nor could their inventions secure us against private Treachery, nor it could against open Force; can I omit to observe from the answer, how unfit these Men would be to govern others, and how unsufferable they are under all Governments; who thus propose to contempt that which they confess to be the great Engine of Government. I might likewise urge the consent of all Nations, which, by how much they became the more polish'd and civiliz'd, do so much the more on this belief. The certainty t

ns have arisen from Predictions which
 their own are above nature, and the won-
 derful Effects wrought by Mira-
 cles, even against it, are confirm'd
 Spiritous, by the unerring testimony
 submit of those Senses, which our A-
 theists make the only and sure
 truth of Knowledge. And do not
 perceive, that that light of
 Reason, which by constant and
 penetrating reflections, in time,
 discover'd, overcame, and baffled
 every Cheat and Errour; has
 notwithstanding, more fully fix'd,
 and clear'd the Being
 of a God, whose Power affords
 such Protection; and whose
 providence affords us such beau-
 tiful and pleasant Contemplati-
 on Engins, that to love that life, with-
 out believing his Being, is to be
 without that Sense and Wit which
 these wild Scepticks pretend to;
 and who, whil'st they shun to be mi-
 more crederable, make themselves so, and
 whil'st they pretend to pass for
 ha B 2 Wits,

Wits, demonstrate themselves
 be Fools, and Brutish. I purposely
 avoid the proof of this
 Metaphysical Arguments, because
 God's own way of proving it,
 by desiring us to consider the
 Sun, Moon, and Stars, and the
 other Objects, which are obvious
 to all Men; for it was fit, that
 what was to be universally be-
 liev'd, should be inferr'd from
 what was universally seen: And
 such as understand not those Me-
 taphysical Notions, are apt
 to believe that there is a design
 to impose upon them.

But since our curiosity must
 always be somewhat satisfied with
 Arguments raised above Sense,
 I shall offer this one: It Cannot
 be deny'd, but that there is some-
 thing in Man that can compare
 two or more different things
 such as, Whether the pain of the
 Head or the Leg be greater.

A

And that this cannot be done by any thing that is material, is very clear; for if so, it must be done by something that touches at once both the things to be compared, and no material thing can do that in the same points; and if it be in different points, then it cannot judge of the difference betwixt the two; for they must be touched in one common point, else there can be no application of the material Judge, to both, at the same time: And if this judgment must be made by something in Man that is immaterial, and so is able to extend its indivisible self to both the things to be compared; then it necessarily follows, that this must be a Spirit; for there can be nothing immaterial but a Spirit; and if we can once comprehend a Spirit, we can never deny there is God: For the hardest things

B 3

that

that are objected against his Being, are those which strike against the Being of Spirits in general.

Because few or none are really distracted by this kind of Madness, tho' they could wish they were, by smothering their Reason with Illusions, that they may cover their Crimes to themselves, with the hopes of Impunity, I hasten to another kind of unreasonable Men, who, tho' they acknowledge there is a God, do yet, by a deplorable negligence, little mind how to please and obey him. And that I may enforce upon my Reader, the weakness of their Reasonings, I wish any of us would think, that if a Society of Men were Shipwrack'd upon, or sent Prisoners to an unknown Isle, were it not most unreasonable for them, to sit Reading, Discoursing, or Gam-

Be- Gaming, and not to think who
 e a- were Masters of that Isle, and
 ge- how they might live in it; and
 re- if they learn'd that it belong'd
 of- to a great Prince, who had ab-
 ish- solute power of Life and Death,
 cir- were it not unreasonable, not to
 they desire to obtain his friendship?
 m- But much more to reject it, if
 pu- he offer'd it with Riches and
 nd- Preferment, upon no other con-
 no' dition, save that they would attend
 od, at his Court, love him, and not
 gli- wrong one another? But this is
 ase- our condition in a much strong-
 ay- er case; for we are here in a
 he- World created by God Almighty,
 , I in which he can kill and pre-
 k, serve, not the Body only, but
 re- the Soul too; nor for some time
 so- only, but for ever; nor requires
 re- he any harder condition of us
 m, than that we would love the
 or Lord our God with all our Hearts,
 m- and our Neighbours as our selves;
 which are so far from being hard

Lessons, that one would think we could not but take great delight in them, if they were not prescrib'd to us as our Duty : For if a Man be admir'd once for his great Courage, Conduct, or Learning, who would not be pleas'd with being allow'd to converse with him ? Who amongst us would not have taken pains to have been lov'd by *Cæsar*, as his Friend, but more, as his Son ? But if *Cæsar* had been as expert a Mathematician as he was a Souldier, and could have burnt his Enemies Ships, like *Archimedes* ; if he had invented Gun-powder for his Magazins, and found out the whole new World, as well as conquer'd a considerable part of the old : How much more would we yet have esteem'd him ? And to proceed further, if this *Cæsar* could either have sav'd his own life, by knowing the secrets of, or by killing alone
all

all his Assassins, or prolong'd
 for many hundreds of years
 that of his Servants; we should
 yet more have rejoiced in his
 Service and Adoption: But what
 is all this to the Infinite Perfecti-
 on of the Great King of Kings,
 whose Servants, Friends, nay and
 adopted Sons we may be? He
 it is who govern'd *Cæsar*, as
 he does the Flies or Ants, who,
 with one word made *Cæsar*,
 and all the World, whereof he
 conquer'd only a part which he
 was not able to retain. By whose
 skill, the Heavens were stretch-
 ed out, in which, vain *Cæsar's*
 greatest Ambition was to be a
 little Star: Who not only knows
 but in one moment, governs all
 the various, and almost infinite
 thoughts and designs of Angels,
 Men, and Devils; and who forces
 them all, how contrary soever
 to one another, to agree in the

great designs he has in governing the World.

Who would not rejoyce to serve a Master, that knew when he were innocent, and who, as he is exactly just to his Servants, so could not be impos'd upon by others, to their prejudice; and tho' even swarms of Witnesses combined against them, could see through the Mists that they threw up, which no Earthly Master, how just soever, can do? But such is our Heavenly Master, who can also not only enrich us when we are poor, and cure us when we are sick; but can tame our Passions, illuminate our Ignorance, strengthen our Inclinations, sweeten our Tempers, and make all these Joys compleat, by the removal of all Fears or Jealousies that can end or lessen them. Can we give any reasonable account, why we should

should be careful to keep the Road exactly, if we knew there were great Precipices on every hand, into which whoever fell, were irrecoverable; and yet knowing, that in our voyage to Eternity, there are Precipices that lead to dreadful Pits of Fire and Brimstone, kindled by the wrath of an angry God : We notwithstanding, go on carelessly, laughing at such as admonish us, and minding little trifles, which we are convinc'd will please no longer then we possess them.

How falsely do we reason, in reflecting on our selves and others ? For we think them mad who endeavor not to get themselves cur'd, when they find they are tormented with Gout and Gravel ; yet who amongst us is at any pains, so much as to seek remedies for his Passions and Vices, which of all other Diseases torment

torment us most : And if we heard a Fellow in Livery, value himself upon the Richness of his Suit, would we not esteem him an airy and foolish Creature? But if we saw a Man who where condemned, and going to the Scaffold, admire himself, and talk of his Power and Glory, would we not conclude him distracted? And yet this is the true State of a Vain and Glorious Monarch, who has nothing but what he has receiv'd from an Infinite God, who can recal it when he pleases; and who, whilst he talks of his Glory and Greatness is by that God condemn'd to die, as irredeemably, as must the meanest Slave, over whom he insults. And since we would laugh at a vain Coxcomb, who whilst he were entertaining his friends in his Master's house, as if it were his own, were taken out of it by the ears, and forc'd to tremble under the
 lash ;

lash; how ridiculous must we conclude *Belsbazzar* (and which is the case of too many other great Men) who whilst he was feasting all his Nobles, and perswading them of His independance, was seized by an irresistible horror which shak'd him all to pieces.

I doubt not for all this but Learned men will think they may justly value themselves on their own great Parts and Skill; and you may read long Lectures made by them on this Subject; but how unreasonable are they in this, since these Endowments are given them as external things are given to others; and a School-Boy may more justly admire himself, because he can repeat excellent lines made by another: or a man, because the borrowed Furniture, that he would make us believe to be his own, were within, and not without doors, or were finer then
that

that borrowed stuff which another had, whom he despis'd. If two poor men should borrow the one ten, and the other a thousand pounds, the difference of the borrowed Summs should not cease to leave both of them equally poor. But he is really a wise and reasonable man, who knowing that what he has is borrow'd, endeavours not to boast of it as his own, but to repay as much as he can the Interest to the true Owner for the Loan. Let us then conclude this Period with the Apostle's just reasoning, 1 Cor. 4. 7. *For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?*

Being once in company with a great Wit, who seeing two poor Chair-men sweat in carrying a gross corpulent vain Fellow; he cry'd

no- cry'd out, that he had rather be
 If hang'd then serve so meanly such a
 the Rogue. Whereupon I told him he
 and was doing a meaner thing, in bear-
 ing up the Extravagancies of a vio-
 lent and tyrannous Statesman, to
 please whose extravagant humour,
 I had seen him sweat more than
 these poor men did; who had also
 in this the advantage of him, that
 they did so to get bread for their
 Family, whereas he did the other
 to feed that Ambition and Avarice
 which tended to destroy him-
 self.

7. Man's unreasonable ness appears
 also in the unsuitableness of the
 Means he uses, to the Ends he pro-
 poses to himself. Who would not
 think him a Fool, who would en-
 deavour to cure a mad Dog by
 putting a golden Collar about his
 Neck? Or who would think to
 cure a Fever in a man by bestow-
 ing a great Office on him? But
 are

are not men such Fools, when they think they can quiet their passions by Riches, or their minds by advancement? Spiritual distempers are to be cur'd by spiritual means, and as the finest Thoughts cannot feed the body, so neither can the greatest Riches, or any other external thing satisfy the immaterial Soul!

If I were desirous to get Preferment, would not I endeavour to please him from whom I were to expect it, and not his Enemies? but tho' we say that we expect, or at least wish to be Favourites to God Almighty, and to be by him happy for ever; yet we spend not our time in obeying him, but in serving openly and assiduously the World, the Devil, and our own Lusts, which are his declar'd Enemies; and that too so resolutely, that any reasonable man cannot upon considering our actions, but conclude, That either we
car'd

car'd not for what he could give,
or else that we were subtle enough
to cheat him, or strong enough to
over-power him.

If a man were going to live in
another Country, would he not
endeavour to accustom himself to
the Customs of it, and to carry
with him things that were useful
in that Country? And would we
not laugh at him, if he spent his
time in building and adorning
that Inne which he were to
leave? But this is our condition,
who bestow all our thoughts on
the things of this world, from
which we should expect to remove
every moment, and in which we
cannot stay long.

It is most strange that men, to
secure themselves against Fortune,
should put themselves more and
more into its power: For the re-
medies we use are to grow richer
and

and greater, and nothing subjects us more to accidents than these do ; for it is for these that men are pursued, and destroyed, and they are oftner crimes than defences.

God has promised, that *if we seek we shall find, if we knock it shall be opened*; so that Prayer is the true way to attain to what is desirable: and men may pray securely at their own Bed-side, or in walking about their own Field. But yet men will leave this sure, safe, and easie way ; and sail to the *Indies* amidst storms, and travel through the Desarts of *Arabia* amongst Thieves, to get unnecessary Riches ; expose themselves to Cannons, and watch in Camps to get Honours, trusting the Seas, Winds, and Cannons more than their own kind and merciful Father, who made and governs all these.

When

When we have Children, we are very desirous to leave them well secur'd, and consequently provide them Estates; but tho' we take pains to breed our Colts, and Hawks, we take no pains in teaching our Children their duty to their Master, as we do those Beasts; and probably by not being bred to a just way of reasoning, they may lose by one extravagance all that we have left them, or at least live unhappily in not knowing how to use it aright. And the same Parents which would bestow their Estates to free their Children from burning for a month in a Fever, will, to get them a little addition to that same state, breed them so, as may occasion their burning to all Eternity.

If any man were guilty of Crimes, and so needed the King's Pardon, would we not think him a meer Brute, if he should instead
of

of seeking it earnestly and sincerely, run up and down railing at him, and reviling his Laws? Yet most of our Wits, who have indeed more guilt than wit, and are not sure what moment they shall be damn'd for ever, make it their business, rather than sport, to treat in ridicule his Divine Majesty and Laws.

Let us a little examine the unreasonable-ness of mens arguing in matters of Honour, wherein they pretend to be so exact, and delicate, and we shall be convinc'd how weak their Reason is.

And in the first place, would not right Reason dictate to us, that those things are fittest for men of Honour, which are most approv'd and recommended by that Judge whom all acknowledge to understand best what is great, glorious, and just? Who would believe any thing to be honourable for a Soldier, which *Cæsar* or *Mareschal*

Turenne

Turenne had condemned as unjust and mean? And if this Rule hold, we must conclude, That it is the Almighty God, the Glorious Maker of Heaven and Earth, and of the heart of man, and not the insolent Courtier, the huffing Hector, or the unstable and ignorant Rabble, who must give the Rules to just Honour and true Grandeur. Nor should the best of moral men be able to perswade us, that any thing is honourable, but according as it agrees with the reveal'd Will of that Omnipotent and Infallible Judge; for if he be Infallible, it is ridiculous that his judgment should not be acquiesc'd in; and if we think him not Infallible, we cannot think he is God.

If any man should call one perjur'd, especially if he were a Person of Quality, he would resent it irreconcilably; and yet are not all such as are guilty of Adultery

tery, guilty of Perjury? and to aggravate this Perjury, it is Perjury against a Lady, to injure whom, and to whom the breach of an ordinary promise would be thought a shameful Crime; but yet much more, when it is considered, that upon that Oath the Lady had deliver'd her self up, and by the like Oath had forsaken all the rest of Mankind: So then, if Perjury be a Villainy, when committed in the most trivial things, and to a person who never obliged us; what can it then be, when committed in the greatest concern, and when the Oath was given in the most considerate manner, and under the greatest obligation to the most deserving person, and to one of that delicate Sex, which the most unworthy are unwilling to injure or cheat?

I doubt not, but all who pretend to Reason, will acknowledge,
that

that Ingratitude is the most abominable of all Vices, and most inconsistent with true Honour. And if a Prince had obliged one of his Subjects, behaving himself as a kind Father to him, would he not be a very Rogue if he were ungrateful; but yet more, if he refused to obey him, after many Promises and Vows, nay, and after many Pardons, having several times relapsed again and again into those Crimes, and even employed the Forces, with which the King had trusted him, against himself? And yet the King of Kings, and our Heavenly Father, having heaped hourly such favours on us, that it needs a mans whole time to repeat them, because every moment of our time makes a part of them, we ungrateful Mifcreants employ all the strength of our Spirits and Bodies in offending him daily, to that height, that tho' we our selves tremble
when

when we think with confusion upon them, and vow against, and mourn for them; yet we reasonable men return with the Dog to the vomit, and with the Sow to the puddle, and add the breach of our new Vows to our old sins.

I know that Pride has form'd for its own defence a body of Law call'd Point of Honour; as one instance whereof, amongst others, I urge how unreasonably men repair their Honour, in endeavouring to take a man's life for a word, damning both themselves and him, and by way of Complement drawing innocent men (and such ordinarily as have the greatest Kindness for them) into the same hazard and condemnation; which in spite of all the Gallantry imaginable, does prove how little use of true Reason men have, tho' they value themselves very much, as if they were the sole Masters of it. For this is not only contrary
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to the Law of God, the true
 Fountain of Honour, as of all good,
 but to the Laws of our Country:
 And what can be more absurd,
 than that some private, young, and
 ranting Hectors should be able to
 make that pass for generous and
 gallant, which whole Nations as-
 sembled have after much reason-
 ing and deliberation condemned
 as a Crime in all Ages and Coun-
 tries; and even the same men,
 who brag of this when enrag'd;
 and in the field, condemn it in
 Parliament and in cold blood?
 But nothing discredits this He-
 roism more, than that those, who
 would not yield up their revenge
 to God, nor their Conscience,
 have been frighted from it by the
 French King and the Gallows.

If one man give another the
 Lye, he must pay down his life,
 because a Man of Honour would
 rather chuse to dye than to be a
 Lyar, or rather thought one; but

C

this

this Man of Honour will flatter, till all Men laugh at him for lying so grossly; and this Eloquence of Knaves must likewise make his Patron a Fool, for being capable to believe what none believes, save himself; so that this Flatterer, who yet passes for a Man of true Honour, makes himself a Liar, and his Patron a Fool. How oftentimes also have we seen these Men of Honour lie and flatter, to promote Faction, and to please the Multitude, which they were thereby designing to Cheat, as if the addition of a Cheat could make a Lie honourable. Rebellion and Pimping are Noble flights of Glory and Kindness, to which, fashionable Men, and Men of Honour can only pretend, and a Prerogative deny'd to those Men who are truly virtuous. If Men, who are tender of their Reputation, were reasonable, would they not consider

ter, for Elo-wife be-
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sider, that all these their Crimes
 and Vices are known to that
 Great God, who is the Fountain
 of Truth, and the Rule of Pu-
 rity, and shall at the Great Day
 be known to Men and Angels?
 If a Lady considered, that all
 her unchast thoughts, and a Per-
 son who passes for an Honest Man,
 that all his Secrets and Cheats
 would be discover'd to their
 Neighbours, though as guilty as
 they, it would confound them:
 How then will all Men look, when
 the Sins they are endeavouring to
 cover, shall be laid open in that
 Illustrious Assembly, where In-
 nocence and Knowledge shall be
 in such high perfection? How
 can we then be judg'd Reason-
 able Creatures, when we dare do
 that before the Almighty God,
 who is of purer eyes than that
 he can behold iniquity, which
 we durst not attempt before our
 own Servants, who depend on

us, and are as frail as our selves? And if we cannot abide the Accusation of our own Conscience, how shall we be able to hold up our Faces in so glorious a Judicature? And can Men be Reasonable Creatures, and yet not mind so great a Concern?

Fame, that tacite acknowledgment of Immortality, even in those who believe it not, is pursued so extravagantly, that Idolatry it self is not more inexcusable: For to gain the opinion of a brutal multitude, we sacrifice to them our Duty, our Quiet and our Security; and what design can we have, or return can we expect for all this? For if we be not Immortal, what signifies our being esteem'd, when we are to have no being? And why should we give our selves real Trouble for an imaginary Good? And if we believe the Christian Religion, it teaches us,
that

that either we must be fav'd or damn'd; if fav'd, Fame from Men will signifie nothing, when we discover how foolish we were to adore such Worms; if damn'd, that which made a great part of our Crime, cannot be an alleviation of its Punishment. But if a Man, believing there is a God, did argue justly, he would value highly the being esteem'd by that Wisdom that cannot err, and whose suffrage will last to all Eternity. Men can only raise our Character, without being able to raise our Merit, but our great Master can really make us merit, and open the eyes of others to understand it, when true, which no man can do, and his esteem brings rewards suitable to its Greatness; and therefore is only worthy of our pains, especially, if we bestowed that pains in serving him, which we do in gaining Fame; we might expect

from his goodness what can never be valuable when obtain'd from Men, because of their meanness; or secure, because of their Injustice or Caprice. If we saw any of our acquaintance running up and down among mean and ignorant People, to perswade them to praise and admire him, we would laugh at his folly, as well as vanity; but this is the condition of us poor blind Sinners, who are sick and dejected, if our silly, blind Fellow-Mortals do not admire us, and praise our Actions.

I have remark'd in my own time, that some, by taking too much care to be esteem'd and admir'd, have by that course miss'd their aim, whil'st others of them, who shunn'd it, did meet with it, as if it had fallen on them, whil'st it was flying from the others; which proceeded from the unfit means these able and reasonable
Men

Men took to establish their Reputation. It is very strange to hear men value themselves upon their Honour, and their being Men of their word in Trifles, when yet that same Honour cannot tie them to pay the debts they have contracted upon solemn Promises, of secure and speedy repayment, starving poor Widows and Orphans, to feed their Lusts ; and adding thus, Robbery and Oppression to the dishonourable breach of Trust. And how can we think them Men of Honour, who, when a Potent and Foreign Monarch is oppressing his weaker Neighbour's hazard their very lives to assist him, tho' they would rail at any of their acquaintance, that meeting a strong Man fighting with a weaker, should assist the stronger in his Oppression.

The surest and most pleasant path to universal Esteem, and

true Popularity, is to be just ;
 for all men esteem him most,
 who secures most their private
 Interest, and protects best their
 Innocence; and all who have a-
 ny notion of a Deity, believe that
Justice is one of his chief Attri-
 butes; and that therefore, who-
 ever is just, is next in Nature to
 him, and the best Picture of Him ;
 and to be reverenc'd and lov'd :
 But yet, how few trace this Path,
 most Men chusing rather to toil
 and vex themselves, in seeking
 Popular Applause, by living high,
 and in profuse Prodigalities, which
 are entertain'd by Injustice and
 Oppression, as if rational Men
 would pardon Robbers, because
 they feasted them upon a part
 of their own Spoils; or did let
 them see fine and glorious Shows,
 made for the honour of the gi-
 ver, upon the expence of the
 robb'd Spectators. But when a
 virtuous Person appears Great by
 his

his Merit, and obey'd only by the charming force of his Reason, all men think him descended from that Heaven which he serves, and to him they gladly pay the Noble Tribute of deserved Praises.

Another great Class of Arguments, to prove how ill Men reason in matters of greatest importance, may be brought from the contradictions we are guilty of in our Conduct. As for Instance, Life is the thing in the World most valu'd, for without it, we can enjoy nothing ; and yet, so unreasonable are we, that for a Complement, we will hazard it so far, as may be rather call'd a lossing of it. When time is going, we cry out against Providence, for having made it so short, and when it is gone, we would give all the World to redeem it ; and yet we are weary of it so far as to bestow Money

upon any thing that will help to spend it; and give it away in Visits, to such, to whom we would not give any thing else. We would for no Money quit one Year of our Life; and yet for the same Money; which we so undervalue in the express exchange, most Men do really give away very many of their best years, since they are spent in gaining Money.

We exclaim against Tyranny, Usurpation and Oppression, and in this we are much in the right: But why then do we admire, and cry up such as have been great Oppressors and Usurpers, as *Alexander, Cæsar*? for in this, we are not only unjust upon the matter, but Enemies to our selves; for that esteem we put upon them who have been such, invites others to make us the prey of our own Errors.

Most Men do admire, and prefer themselves to all others, which

is

is a great proof of our unreasonableness ; but yet, even these cannot stay with themselves, and by being afraid to look into their own hearts, contradict the esteem which yet at all times they have for themselves, to an unsufferable Excess. All Men desire to prefer the best Company ; and when Men prefer any Company to the being alone, they demonstrate that themselves are not the best. Most Men, when they are young, condemn Riches, and love them when they are old ; and though our Wits scorn to think, or say with the vulgar, yet even these are swayed as much, and as strongly by vulgar Vices, as those who never exclaim'd against the unthinking Crowd. All Creatures stand in awe of others, according to the esteem they have of them ; and tho' we admire our own Perfections, and value ourselves far above our proportion,

yet

yet stand we not in awe to commit wickedness when alone, which we durst not commit if others were present; and thus we are so unreasonable, that we want a due reverence and esteem for our selves, where we ought to have it, and have it excessively where we ought to want it totally.

Self-love, the falsest tho' the subtlest of all Reasoners, endeavours to perswade us, that in revenge, we shall, by seeing our Enemies ruined, remain our selves the more excellent Creatures, our Rivals being thus depress'd: And this is that hid reason which justifies to us that Passion which is truly most inhumane. But what an improper Argument is this, for we are not one whit the more excellent, that another is ruined by an Accident. Another Argument brought by Revenge, is, that thus we shall secure our selves against our Enemies, and
so

so Revenge would pass with us under the disguise of Self-defence ; but because this would seem cowardly, and be in effect, a tacite acknowledgment of Fear ; we rather say, that in Revenge, we will teach others not to attack us. But all these are false reasonings ; for no Man secures his true Quiet by Revenge, for it raises an Enemy within, which is always present, and able to disquiet : And all Men conclude themselves obliged to destroy the Revengeful Man, by the same Argument that he pursues his Revenge ; and thus a Man is tortured by it till it be satisfied, and frightened by it after he has prevail'd.

Most Men desire to be in Employment, from a secret desire to be admir'd ; whereas when they are in Employments, they do not those Just and Virtuous things, for which they would be truly admir'd :

admir'd : And albeit Self-love
 makes them believe, that the
 being fear'd is a mark of true
 Dominion ; yet they consider
 not, that even Dominion is only
 at the bottom desireable, because
 it is a sign of Merit and innate
 Excellency ; and does please, be-
 cause it makes us believe, by the
 Suffrage of others, that we are
 Noble and Excellent Persons, of
 which, even the least reasona-
 ble cannot seriously be perswad-
 ed, except they believe they
 have done virtuous things. And
 thus it were more reasonable to do
 what is really virtuous, than to
 cheat our selves, with thinking
 that others admire us. And it
 is very unreasonable not to do
 things rather for Virtue it self,
 then for the Applause which fol-
 lows it, since that Applause de-
 rives its desireableness from Vir-
 tue, and so Virtue it self should
 be much more desired : And which
 shews

shews yet more the weakness of our Reason, tho' in this we contradict the undeniable Sentiments of Mankind, yet we are cheated into it by a mistake, as if it were easier to attain to the Applause of Virtue, then to Virtue it self ; whereas, quite contrary, it must be more difficult to attain Applause, since it depends upon many thousands of Rivals and capricious Fools ; whereas Virtue springs from a Man's own Breast, and we may have it, and keep it in spite of all Mankind.

Every man also, may in his private Station and Employment, find thousands of Instances to confirm this Truth. And thus a Courtier should consider, that when he sees his Prince bow and pray to a Superiour, before whom he acknowledges himself to be a Worm and a Vapour, that certainly it is fit to do

do nothing to displease that Superiour Power, for gaining the favour of that Prince who adores him; and who would not think him mad, who would scorn to depend on a Monarch, but would take pains to flatter his Footman? When a Lawyer observes that Men take such pains to secure in Law an Interest that cannot be secur'd against Accidents, he should in reason conclude, that it is brutish not to take more pains to secure that which shall never fail: And when he observes how zealously the Eldest Men defend a Life that Accidents, nay, and Nature probably will end with the Process, should he not consider, what pains should be taken to secure a Life that continues for ever, free too from that Care, and those Sickneses, that even before Death make this Life miserable.

If a Souldier who were besieg'd
by

by his Enemies, should abandon his Watch, and spend his time in Gaming and Drinking, or should lose the glorious opportunity of defeating them, for a Feast; or, as *Mark Anthony*, for a Mistress: Especially, if they be such Enemies, whom we know, would not only kill, but torment us to Death, were he not to be accounted a Fool? But that is our case; for being surrounded with Temptations and Devils, we spend our time in Toys and Trifles, and whilst we hear that others have receiv'd an Immortal Crown, for having overcome their Spiritual Enemies, we, who value Fame and Glory so much, spend our time in pleasing two or three silly Courtiers, whom we despise whilst we attend them, and laugh at the Actions which we seem to admire. A Merchant were ridiculous, if he should spend his Stock and his time in buying up
Wares

Wares that were unfashionable in that Country where he has his abode; and yet most Men employ themselves wholly in gathering Riches, and getting that Knowledge, which can neither be carried to Heaven with them, nor can comfort them when they are in Hell. And I have oft applauded the remark of a Gentlewoman, who hearing a whole Society admire one of her acquaintance, for a great Wit, told them, that his Father had left him a great Estate, which he had spent amongst Whores, that he had himself married a Whore, and had chang'd the Orthodox Religion, in which he was bred up, for a worse, and was not devout in that neither; and desir'd them to consider if that Man deserv'd to be call'd a Wit?

Nor are we only unreasonable in pursuing our Pleasures and Vices; but the very measures we
take

take in being Virtuous, shew how weak our Reason is, and how ill we use it. For our Friendship is for the most part but the preferring those for whom we have a kindness, to those who deserve better both our kindness and those employments; and thus we rob the Commonwealth, to repay the debt our Gratitude owes. The Courage of many is but a hypocritical disguising of their fear, or a dull ignorance of their danger. For when a man goes to Battel, he fears to dye; but to disguise this fear, he considers the shame of flying, and knowing certainly that his Reputation would be ruined, he fears more this certain loss, than the hazard of being kill'd: but if he cannot attain to that, he at least braves it out, and endeavours to cheat others, when he cannot satisfy himself.

Liberality and Charity are oft times but the disguised effects of
Vanity,

Vanity, wherein men tacitely design rather their own perpetuity, than the advantage of those on whom they bestow what is given, in which they act very unreasonably: for if they lent it to God, he would restore it with a very enriching interest: But in bestowing it on Fame, they bestow it on a Cheat, which has oft deceived both them and others. And it still seems strange, that we will bestow it on that Multitude (for Fame and the Multitude are the same thing) to preserve any one of whom from starving, we would not bestow one farthing. And yet the World esteem those who do such things more than they do reasonable and judicious persons.

It is one of the chief and Fundamental Dictates of Reason, that we should do to others as we would wish them to do to us. But tho' we exclaim against our Equals,
 poor

poor Mortals, if they refuse us this measure, yet we allow it not to our great King and Sovereign. If we heard that any who pretended to be our friend, did sit tamely and hear us rail'd at, and contemn'd, we would conclude them base and treacherous; and a King would for this treat his Subjects as Rebels; but yet we sit not only to hear impious Creatures rail at Religion, and oft-times at Providence it self, with so little resentment, that we comply and even admire the Miscreant. I remember that I suggested once to a Person of Quality, who was busie about his Accounts, to consider if our Steward should spend our Rents upon his own Affairs, or upon maintaining his own Family or Luxury, and much more if he should riot it away with our Enemies, would we not hate him as a Rogue, and at least recal the Trust

Trust we gave him. But the Great Master of the Family of the Faithful having appointed us only to be Stewards, not to appropriate, but to bestow the Estates he gave us for the use of his poor Children and Servants, preferring us kindly to as much as may satisfie our Conveniency, for so the Scripture, and even Reason it self, teaches us: (for why should the Wise God have bestowed so much upon some, whilst others want, if he had not design'd to level all by this necessity of distribution) yet we see his Children starve, whilst we employ the portions due to them upon the Wicked who are his Enemies. And thus we use the Almighty God at the rate we would not suffer from the meanest of our Servants. And so unreasonable are even such as are convinc'd of the reasonableness of Charity, that by doing their charitable actions in publick, they
lose

lose the reward, by not preserving the true design of it; for as our Saviour argues, *Mat. 6 4. It is very just, that since they bestow their Charity to gain the applause of men, they should be rewarded with the applause for which they bestowed it; And how can they expect a reward from God, to please whom it was not given; and he is not obliged to repay what was not lent him: And they cannot expect double payment, for being paid by men, the Obligation is fully satisfied.*

I shall conclude these Observations with what ordinarily we conclude our unreasonable lives, and that is Death-bed Repentance, which of all things is the most unreasonable. For if we believe the Rewards and Torments which attend our future state, and make the delay so dangerous, why delay we? And if we believe neither of these, why repent we? The one cannot but make our present pleasures

pleasures very bitter, by the fear that must thereupon haunt us; and the other cannot but needlessly cut off the pleasures which we exclude as inconsistent with true Repentance. But which of us being condemn'd to horrible Torments, would delay to seek a remission till the last hour? or being invited to leave our Cottage to receive a plentiful Estate, would delay to undertake his Journey? and yet we easily delay our Repentance, which can only preserve us, condemn'd Sinners, from eternal Torments; and which would certainly bring us, poor Wretches, to that Inheritance of immortal Glory. And tho' we condemn our selves for leaving the dispatch of our little Concerns till the last hour, yet we delay that great and necessary Work, on which a long Eternity hangs, for every trifle. And that which aggravates much this Neglect, is, that the Reasons
which

which encourage us to it are as weak, as the thing it self is absurd and dangerous. For the hope we may live, has for its foundation a frail Body, that every accident can destroy; and it is a wonder, that when we hear of so many unexpected deaths, we should not tremble to think, what if I had dyed? And tho' the Mercy of God be as infinite as his Justice, yet it is insupportable insolence in us to think, that we can be sav'd when we please: this is not only to undervalue him as the last thing to be chosen, which implies that our infinitely glorious Maker is of all things least worthy of our choice, but in this we exalt our selves above him, as if we might command him to bestow upon us Heaven and Happiness when-ever we thought fit to call for it. And which of us would bestow the meanest favour upon him, who would resolve to

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oppose,

oppose, or but neglect us as long as he pleas'd. The delaying makes us the unfitter, not only to crave but even to receive, Mercy ; and since all our life, albeit as piously spent as humane frailty can allow, is short enough for so great a Work ; what can we expect from a few sickly hours distracted by new pains, and amazed at so many old sins ? And the Scripture having commanded us to repent, and bring forth good Works ; it has every where made good Works and a subsequent Amendment of our Lives, the mark as well as fruit of sincere Repentance : and therefore since a Death-bed Repentance must want this proof, it cannot but be by so much the more uncomfortable to us and our friends. Nor is there any generous Soul, who having receiv'd so great and undeserved a Pardon, would not desire to be able to live, that he might magnifie that infinite

long Infinite God to whom he ow'd it.
 I know that the Thief on the
 Cross has been a stumbling-block
 to many others ; but we reason
 very weakly from this Instance of
 God's Mercy : for he by believing
 the Divinity of our Saviour a-
 midst all that could have been said
 against it, when even the Jews
 were desiring him to come down
 from the Cross, and they would
 believe in him ; and the other
 Thief was reviling him ; did evi-
 dence as much Faith in that con-
 tracted Span when dying, as the
 best of us can do in a prolong'd
 Life. And it being fit for the
 Saviour of the World to shew his
 Power and Mercy when he was
 leading Captivity captive, that
 happy Thief can be no Precedent
 for us who remain unconverted
 after so many Miracles, that no
 reasonable man can now doubt of,
 especially if he never heard, as
 it's probable, of that Gospel which

we have so oft undervalued, and if he has not neglected former offers of Mercy which we have so oft contemn'd. And shall we presume on God's Goodness, because one man was sav'd, and but one, to preserve Mankind from despair ; not remembering, that as the Thief obtain'd a Pardon when he sought it, so *Esaú* found no place for Repentance, tho' he sought it earnestly, *Heb.* 12. 17. And tho' those who came in at the last hour, got as much as those who had wrought at the first; yet it is remarkable, that it is said, they came not too near, because no man had desired them. But let me conjure any noble Soul to consider, that if God be worthy of the Adoration of Angels through all Eternity ; and that we confess, that to walk, like *Enoch* with him, will be so amiable and glorious, why should we delay in for Pleasures that are unworthy of a reasonable Soul, and which last but

but for a moment? For at least we lose so much unexpressible Joy and Pleasure ; and in delaying our Repentance we continue to be sick when we may be whole, to be blind when we may see, to be poor when we may be rich, to lye in Prison when we may live at Liberty, and to be Slaves to our Enemies when we may be Heirs to a Kingdom. All which induce me to believe, that they who delay Repentance, design not to repent, but flatter themselves with a false conceit of it ; for to repent is to be grieved, and no man who is grieved, can put it off at his pleasure, no more than a man can be griev'd or not as he pleases. As also if a man resolv'd sincerely to repent, 'tis necessary that he were convinc'd of the greatness of his danger, and were actually asham'd as well as afraid thereof ; and if he were truly touch'd with these Convictions , he would not con-

tinue in the Courses which occasion'd them. And to finish all, is it not the height of unreasonableness for a man to continue to do these things, of which he knows he must be asham'd, and for which he resolves to be exceedingly troubled and afflicted? And if we were coming into a Room where a man were wounding himself, would we not conclude him yet madder if he told us, that he would give himself more and more, because such a man got so many Wounds, and yet was cured.

Let me therefore conclude this Discourse with the noble and just reasoning us'd by St. Peter, 2 *Epist.* 3. 10. 11. *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the Heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the Elements shall melt with a fervent heat, the Earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up: Seeing then that all these things shall be dissol-*

dissolved, what manner of Persons ought ye to be in all holy Conversation and Godlineſſ?

And what a frightened Creature will the greatest Hero be, when he finds himself in the midst of a burning World, having greater terrors within his Breast than these rais'd by an Omnipotent God, and which will force him to cry to the Hills and Mountains to fall upon him, and cover him from the face of this angry Judge?

But these great and sad Truths need (alas) to be preach'd by an Angel, to Hearers standing upon the brink of their Grave, and having Heaven and Hell open'd before them.

P A R T II.

*Whence proceeds it that Man
is so unreasonable, and how
to improve our Reason.*

IT is indeed very strange,
that Man, who improves
daily so much in all Arts
and Sciences, that are nei-
ther so necessary, so easie, nor
so advantageous to us, should
still decrease in this excellent
Study, this Noble and Useful
Knowledge: Let us then enquire
a little into the occasions of these
Errours in his reasonings, and
we shall find them so silly, that
D 5 they

they also discover to us new Weaknesses in his Reason.

I know that we generally charge this on Man's Atheism, imagining he would reason justly, if he believ'd the Principles I have laid down; but this is a mistake, for Atheists reason most weakly, as well as others, and most inconsequentially to their own Principles; for even Atheists disquiet themselves for Fame and Money, and by Whoring and Drinking destroy their Bodies, which is all they dote upon, and should preserve, and which shews their unreasonableness, according to their own Principles; and that Infidelity is not the cause of false reasoning, appears clearly, because such as are not Atheists, reason falsely; and we may observe, that such as believe that by the ill Diets they use, their terrible pains will be renew'd do yet adventure on them; oh, that they only of all Man-kind

kind were the unreasonable Men!
 But how unreasonable are they,
 who believing there is a Crown
 of Glory reserv'd for those that
 will run that Heavenly race, chuse
 rather to sit Tipling and Gam-
 ing; that believe the Son of
 God stands stretching out his
 arms, ready to preserve them,
 and yet will rather sink down
 into that fearful Pit, from which
 there is no redemption; who will
 rather starve than seek that Hea-
 venly Manna, and languish of
 their Wounds, than seek the Balm
 of *Gilead*, from the hand of a
 loving Father; whom no Judg-
 ments on others can awaken, nor
 Mercies to themselves can ob-
 lige; Sick, amidst so many Cures;
 Poor, amidst such plenty; Blind,
 notwithstanding so much Light;
 and Insensible, in spite of so ma-
 ny Convictions.

But how can Men reason well,
 since they neither understand the
 true

true use of Reason, nor what Man is ? And these are the two first and great occasions of our Errours.

As to Reason, let us examin our selves narrowly, and we shall find that Men think they need not Reason in the great and considerable designs of Life, as if these were matters to be taken upon trust ; And as if Reason were to be us'd only in matters of State, or in Debate or Trade. And a desire to know, who sits down to reason with himself, why he lives so or so, or to know, if what he does, is according to the Rules given him, for regulating his Actions. I have my self spent Twenty years in reasoning eagerly to secure other Mens Estates ; but I have spent very little time to consider, by a nobler reasoning, why do I spend so much time in reasoning for other Men, and yet so little for my self ? tho' in the mean time,

I do but too much prefer my self to all others ? You will find some Divines very busie in arguing, whether God from all Eternity could have made Creatures, and yet these Men will never consider what shall become of them in Eternity. The cure then of this, is to consider Reason, not as a Tool, useful for Gain or Fame only, but as a Square, put in our hands, by our kind God, to instruct us how to make our Actions straight and even ; and as a Workman does first mind to have all regulated by his Square, and after his work is finished, applies the Square to what he has made ; so ought we, when any thing is design'd by us, resolve to do all in it by the rules of Reason, and when the Action is ended, examin if it be so: And to invite us to this, God has not oblig'd us to seek for this any foreign or remote
Remedy

Remedy; no, nor to owe our Remedy to any other; but has plac'd his Candle in our Breasts, and honour'd us with the being our own Governours and Directors. Let us then think, and think of matters of Importance, and of matters that import us; let us think as much of Heaven, which cannot be taken from us, when once we are possessed of it, as we do of temporal Estates, in the possession of which we cannot be secured. Let us think as much upon our selves, whom we value too much, as upon others, whom we value too little.

We use oft-times our Reason to argue falsely for Interest, or by Pre-ingagement, and this debauches our Reason, after which it continues easily in this Errour: For this takes off that Reverence and Esteem we ought to have for just reasoning. Thus Lawyers
favour;

favouring still, and being oblig'd
 to maintain the cause of those
 who have retain'd them, force
 their Reason to find Arguments
 for their own side; Divines think-
 ing themselves obliged to defend
 the Positions of that Church
 wherein they were born, reason
 still in its defence: States-Men,
 to fortifie their Partie, endeavour
 to perswade all Men to embrace
 it; and Orators, not excepting
 the Philosophers amongst them,
 to beautifie their discourses, urge
 things that are meer Flourishes,
 having much Lustre, but no
 Strength; great instances where-
 of are to be seen in *Seneca*, and
 generally in all the Heathens, who,
 as I shall shew expressly elsewhere,
 were forc'd, by not knowing the
 true Principles whereupon Reason
 was to be built, to maintain by
 false reasonings the true Principles
 that they design'd to recommend.
 We do likewise form our Mora-
 lity

lity by our Interest, and guide not our Interest by our Morals ; and after we have form'd any Design, we find out Reasons to perswade us that it is just: And thus we oft-times mistake Interest, Imagination, and Prejudices, for solid Reason; the true cure whereof lies in being painful and curious in our first Reasonings ; and as careful not to commit Errors by false and careless Arguings, in matters of eternal Happiness, as Mathematicians are in their Demonstrations about Figures and Conclusions which cannot secure them against one Misfortune, nor add one day to their Lives

Bigotry, and false conceptions of Religion, do also darken much our Reason ; for sometimes, by implicit Faith and Infallibility, (those great Tyrants over Reason) we accustom our selves to Laziness, wherein we lose the habit of Reasoning ; and some-
times

times by imposing upon us things inconsistent with it, and by teaching us that it is a dangerous Guide, we lessen our own esteem for it, and create insensibly in our selves a Jealousie that it is an Imposture; and we baffle it so on these occasions that at other times it dares not try its own strength. I confess, that it ought in a just submission yield to his commands who made it, nor should we hear the Servant when the Master speaks; but except when the will of God does expressly ordain ones Reason to submit, we ought not to deny our selves the true exercise of it, to please Men, who understand not its true strength, or do upon designs impose on us the abandoning of it. And this has infected us so far, that by it all other Sciences did fall very low. And if some bold defender, such as *Cartes* and others had not interpos'd

pos'd, we had been led by implicit Faith, in all the Objects of Knowledge as well as in all the Objects of Faith ; and every School-man would have exacted as much absolute submission to his own Dictates as we should pay to the unerring Commands of our infallible Creator. And oft times Self-love passing for Religion, blinds us whilst it promises Illumination: As a clear instance whereof I shall desire any wise Man to consider, that if this were true Zeal which led Men to hazard all they have for the ridiculous difference about indifferent Ceremonies or Tenets, why do they not hazard all they possess for the defence of the Christian Religion against the Turks ; since in sound Reason, and by a Mathematical certainty, the whole is to be preferred to a part ; and to prove that this is the effect of Self-love, and not of true Devotion,

tion, it is very observable, that the less the differences be in such cases, we are ordinarily the more passionate in them, being inclin'd rather to have our Sentiments sustain'd; than the Commands of God obey'd; most men being to themselves their own only God, and being asham'd that they should err even in the meanest circumstance.

Men may think me insolent when I tell them that they understand not themselves, but they should bear this from me, who would willingly wish that they could justly tax me of a Lye in it. But for my security I must put them in mind, that Monsieur *Paschal* told them before me, that he had laid aside the study of the Mathematicks, because few understood to converse with him, in it, and betook himself to consider Man; as thinking that a Subject so near, and of such concern to every

every one, that all could not but understand it; and yet he found this less understood than the other. But that I may contribute my mean Endeavors for clearing them in this, I must desire them to consider, that Man being created to love and admire God, it must follow by a necessary consequence, that God was to be the Center of all his Knowledge; and right Reason was a drawing of all his Conclusions as so many Lines, to rest upon God as that Center. But Man designing to exalt himself, does by a woful mistake make himself the Center, and Self-love, as another Reason, draws all into this design. And thus, whereas we should study to understand the excellent Works of the Creation, that in them we may understand the Infiniteness of that wonderful Creator; we study them only thereby to adorn our own Spirits, and thus to raise an Esteem in others

others for us: and crook in all the Conclusions we make to our selves and our Conveniency, as the Center of all our Designs. And thus we have invented new Sciences, Arts, and Recreations, such as Criticisms, Raillery, Comedies, Tragedies, &c. meerly that our Works may be admir'd as much as his. And therefore it is impossible we can ever reason justly, since all the Lines of our Reasoning tend to a wrong Center; but if we return to our Duty in resolving to love and admire him, and not our selves, every Conclusion being drawn from true Principles and Positions, would recover its original streightness. And thus if we ador'd God more than Kings and Princes, we would not displease God to please them, that we might be enrich'd or advanc'd by them. If we studied only to know him in his Creatures, and not to raise our own Fame by them,

them, we would not toil and vex our selves to acquire Fame; nor forget serving and adoring him, that we might get time to know those Sciences, and be esteem'd for, and delighted in that Learning. Self-love, amongst its other Cheats, hinders us to study Christian Morality, because that would let us see how vile and frail we are; and therefore, as a diversion, it carries us impetuously to study others Sciences, wherein we may admire our own Wit and Sagacity: But that which seems to me the true Notion of Learning is, that it should be a design to know and admire God in his Works; for which Natural Philosophy and Mathematicks are to be studied; in his Providence, which we may know by History; in his Justice to be known by Law; and in his governing the Soul of Man, which is the Object of Moral Philosophy: but above
all,

all, in himself and the Mysteries of our Salvation, taught by Divinity when well directed.

A Proof of which, as well as a new Cause of our Errours and Reasoning is, That the first Rule by which our Reasons are squared and directed, are the Writings of those Illustrious Heathens, who in our Youth are recommended to us as the only Guides and Patterns: The best of which, such as *Plato*, *Epictetus*, *Seneca*, and others, being absolutely ignorant of Man's great Disease, which is Original Sin, could not but mistake the Remedies of his Actual Transgressions, and knowing nothing more excellent than their own Reason, they concluded it was sufficient. And having from their Poets and Traditions learned mean, low thoughts of their Gods, who were in those days made the chief Actors of the sins they should have punished, and describ'd as more employ'd

employ'd in satisfying their own Passions, than in governing of the World. Those misled Philosophers did not only equal themselves to, but raised themselves above the Gods, whom they taught others and themselves to adore. And to that height did this mistake in their *Reasoning* fly, that *Seneca* concludes his Wise man much preferable to the Gods, because the good they did, arose from the necessity of their own Nature; whereas man being left to a freedom in his Actions, made them good by his own wise choice. *Epictetus* founds his Philosophy upon that only Principle, *That the things within us are in our own power, but the things without us are not.* Whereas St. *Paul* from Heaven assures us, *That of our selves, as of our selves, we can do no good.* And our own Experience, doth most convincingly agree with St. *Paul*, against *Epictetus*. And where-
as

as a Principle in any Science should be an uncontroverted Truth, we find daily that this Principle is an absolute Lye. For that man who thinks that he can with an unerring hand govern his Passions, has never undertaken the subduing of them. And *video meliora, proboque, deteriora sequor*, agrees much better with our own Experience, as well as with St. Paul, who, tho' among the greatest of Saints, complains justly, *Rom. 7. 15. That which I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I:* and therefore is forced to cry out, *Who shall deliver me from this body of Death?* Cicero's Discourse concerning the Nature of Gods, and Plato's Dialogues of the Immortality of the Soul, may convince us how weakly those great Patterns of Philosophy do reason, even upon those Subjects where Reason was not altogether mistaken. And from
E those,

those, and all the Writings of the Ancient Pagans, I do more justly conclude, That those great Ideas which our Masters have given us of them, and the Eloquence which shines every where in their Writings, have misled us from the ways that lead to the New *Jerusalem*; and from admiring the Beauty of Holiness which shines in those Scriptures, which have God Almighty and the Holy One of *Israel* for their Author and Subject, and in which we are taught to expect more help from Heaven, than from our selves, against our innate and original Corruption, which is more to be overcome by praying than thinking, and can never be overcome without that Humility and Self-denial, which was absolutely unknown to the Heathens, as I hope to prove in another Discourse, where these thoughts shall have their full scope. I

I am far from designing in this to root out Self-love, but rather to direct and improve it. For certainly God has grafted Self-love in every Man's Heart, to the end, Man might thereby be the more oblig'd to love him, to whom he owes all those Excellencies which he loves in himself, and that he may be thereby oblig'd to preserve himself as a part of the Universe, and which is in general preserv'd by every Man's loving himself; and so far has God allow'd this Self-love, that he punishes Man when he destroys himself. But that Self-love which I here inveigh against, is a false and imposture passion, whereby Man makes himself the Spring, from which all his Designs follow, the Mark at which they aim, and the Rule by which they are to be squared, than which nothing can be more unreasonable. For how can we justify

our selves, in requiring absolute deference from all that is ours, if we yield it not to that Infinite Being to whom we owe all; and as he brought us out of nothing, so we should still remember that we are nothing before him. If every Man made himself the Rule, and drew all to himself, what a distracted thing would this World be, and how impossible would it be for any Man to live comfortably in it? And as a private Man would be esteem'd mad, who in a Court, would think that all things should be design'd there for his Glory and Pleasure: So much more is Man a distracted Creature, when he makes himself the chief aim of all his Actions. Whereas, if a Courtier take great care to please the Monarch, and to design his Glory and Advantage, he will thereby raise himself in a securer, as well as a juster way. And there-

therefore because Self-love is so strong an Oratour, and us still at the bottom of all perswasion, we should examine cautiously, what is urged upon us under the disguise of Self love, and whether we do really love our selves when we yield to those things to which we are tempted. I shall conclude this Period with a sad Assertion, That in spite of all that Men profess, yet too many really, at the bottom, mistake themselves so far, as to think that they have no original Frailties, and therefore that they are able to command their Passions, and that they need no Divine Assistance, that they are nothing else, save that body which we see, that they are not to die so soon, and that the things they are doing now are the only things to be car'd for, and will remain with them for ever. And if most men have this *Idea* of themselves, I desire to know

how they can draw just conclusions from such mistaken Principles.

Another cause of our Reasoning so weakly, is, that the things of another World are too remote to seem great to us, and too spiritual to be discerned by carnal Eyes. The least thing, when plac'd immediately before our Eyes, will intercept, and exclude all further prospect; and even the least conspicuous Objects, and Sensual things do, by a constant tide of emanations, flow in continually upon us, so as to fill our thoughts, and leave little room for any thing else. But as a Remedy to this, let us consider, that since even Corporal, and Sensual pleasures charm us only when we think much upon them, it follows, that thinking is the Source, and Origin of Esteem: tho' we see not the riches of a golden Mine, yet our belief will make

make us toil for it, and the hope of succeeding to an Estate will oblige us to follow eagerly what that hope suggests. And since *Faith is the evidence of things not seen*, it does represent things to come, with a certainty, that makes them present; and albeit it may be objected, that we have seen some such things as these Mines, and Worldly Successions, and therefore it is that we believe and love them more; yet that is of no moment. For the miracles that Men have heard of, and the wonderful works of Providence which we daily see, especially when born in upon us, by the conviction of our own Consciences, seem as strong motives as any that sense can afford Conscience, that luminous Sense of the Soul, being stronger, and more perswasive to any that will hear it, than any of our dull and outward Senses, which have

only assistance from stupid Flesh and Blood : Conversation also about things Spiritual and Divine, will be in place of Sensual Emanations to us, and will represent a future Life, and the World to come to a hearkning Soul, as if it were present ; nor will the Almighty fail to assist that Eloquence which has him for its only and ultimate scope.

The Soul certainly being a Spiritual substance, can more easily unite it self to immaterial Objects, such as a future state of Happiness, than to the terrestrial Objects, with which we fill it ; and the only fault is in us, who do not apply our selves to the thinking on these. Do we not find that such as aspire to Fame are more taken with it than any Man is with Meat or Drink, yea, and Life it self, for the conquest whereof all these are contemn'd : And yet Fame is a meer immaterial

terial Object, that has nothing affecting the Senses otherwise than by thinking nothing Present, nothing Corporeal; and generally, the Spirit of Man is more pleas'd with Expectation than with any present Possession whatsoever; so far, that if we expect any little accident, it will busie more our thoughts, and fasten them more to it than a thousand things of greater value already possess'd. This then can be no such hard task as our laziness perswades it to be.

Tho' we be convinc'd of the truths on which I have founded my Observations, yet we advert not to them, nor heed them. Thus tho' an Object were most conspicuous, yet if we dote so upon any other, as never to turn our Eyes that way, we shall not be taken with either its Value or Beauty. We are bred up in a great esteem for the things

of this World, and so are rather pre-engag'd than blind, and buy not that Pearl of price, because we have laid out our Stock on other trifles, which is a great defect in our Reason, and for which we would condemn other Merchants: And this is to be cur'd by having a true value for things, and by rectifying all our *Ideas*; and therefore, he who resolves to reason justly, should begin first to consider, when any thing occurs, of what use it may be, and of what value it is. As for instance, Is this Land, for which I am sinfully providing Money, worth Heaven? or this Man, whom I am to please, abler to make me happy than God Almighty, to whom in this I prefer him? And so, like a skilful Chymist, resolve every thing into its true Principles, and then try its value; and like a Merchant, who has been often cheated, resolve

resolve at last to consider what such things are worth, whether they will be fashionable where we are going, and whether they will return us the Stock we lay out upon them?

For improving this thought, we should consider, that tho' we discover truths, yet we do not take time to ponder them sufficiently: And thus, tho' we be convinc'd, yet we improve not sufficiently our convictions. Self-love, and the love of Ease has us'd us to a partial and superficial way of enquiry; and from this also proceed these wanderings which weaken those pious Meditations, and disturb that earnestness in Prayer, by which we can only procure a just illumination in our reasoning; desultoriness of thought grows daily when it is not lessen'd, and the next days wanderings are the punishment of those which we suffered to prevail

prevail yesterday. But should we not be asham'd, that we cannot think our Salvation worthy of some serious hours, since it is that which God Almighty has constantly design'd, and follow'd from all Eternity, tho' we are far more concerned in it. And that we can spend many entire hours upon a question of Law or Mathematicks, and yet cannot fix our thoughts upon that Infinite Being, in whom there are far more infinite Perfections; an Object that can never be exhausted, where every thought would open a new Scene of thoughts, yet more delightful; by which, Angels have been for many thousands of years detain'd in constant raptures, contemplating those admirable Mysteries, which the Scripture tells us, the Angels desire to pry into, finding by a constant enquiry, new matter of holy Learning,
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and blessed Curiosity; and are said by God himself to have learn'd this from those happy Christians to whom those mysteries were first reveal'd, *Eph. 3. 8.* Learn then, O Christian, to manage thy Spirit, try first by what means thou usest to fix it on other occasions, and improving these from the obvious advantages that pious fixation will yield above all others; beg humbly, by Prayer, a new supply to thy native Forces, acknowledge to God that thou hast taught thy own thoughts this seditiousness and tumultuariness of which thou complain'st, and hope, that as by frequent yieldings thou feddest that Vice into a habit, so that by frequent and resolute oppositions thou may'st destroy that obstinate and dangerous habit, and introduce a contrary one, which will make thy fix'dness easie and pleasant. Frequent reasonings

sonings do also not only make us argue more strongly and easily, but do warm us into a conviction first, and then into a love for that for which we contend: And thus Lawyers are oft-times convinc'd, even in the ill Causes they plead; and Hereticks fix themselves in their Errors, by frequent contests for them. Why then should we not argue more frequently both against our selves, and with others, upon these excellent Truths by which also we should be engag'd in honour to walk suitably to these truths, of which we profess to others that we are convinc'd? And who could be so absurd, as after he has been debating against another for his Drinking, yet would invite him to a Debauch? But, alas, every Man loves to debate in his own Calling, except the Christian: And it is become as much a shame to talk of Devotion as it ought to

to be our Glory and Delight ; and men seem afraid to debate, lest by being too much convinc'd of what they ought to do, they should be too much terrified for what they have done ; and so these Convictions beget an uneasiness to them, when to gratifie their humour they are tempted to renew their sins.

Hypocrisie affords us a clear proof of this partiality, as well as of Man's contradicting himself ; for to confess there is a God who is Omniscient, who knows the secrets of hearts, and before whom there is nothing hid in Heaven or Earth, and yet to think that we can conceal our thoughts from his all-seeing Eye, implies a flat Contradiction ; as it also does to care for nothing but what may cause an esteem in our selves, for our selves. We really value other mens approbation, because it confirms us in our own : nor
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would the vainest man alive value all the flatteries imaginable, if he thought he could not deserve them. Yet in Hypocrisie we must know, that we deserve not the applause to which we pretend, and it is worthy of our thoughts to enquire impartially, how men can reconcile these in themselves; for the most debauched Reason will not adventure upon any Contradiction without some seeming reconciliation. And tho' at the first it may seem that want of consideration is the cause of this, yet this cannot be; for if we know not that we are masquing, it is no Hypocrisie; and on the contrary, Hypocrisie requires great reflection, because it needs much precaution. The Reason then of the first must be, That as to God we trust our Repentance, and to his Mercy; as if forsooth, we did him little wrong, by making his Creature appear more excellent than

than it is, and as if it might pre-
 judge his Service to let others see,
 that we are many times more
 wicked than they, or that we did
 God good Service in encouraging
 others to be Pious by our good Ex-
 ample, and that we by Hypocri-
 sie do only raise an esteem, or
 come to an employment by which
 we may be truly serviceable to
 God in our other actions. But I
 really think, that the Heart of
 Man is so narrow, that it can hold
 only one Scheme of thoughts at
 once, and therefore this little Soul
 being fill'd with a desire of ap-
 plause, and with the shame of be-
 ing silly and undeserving, it re-
 flects indeed, but all its reflections
 look that way. The man is full
 of this and intent upon it, and
 so he sees not the Contradiction,
 how palpable soever it be ; but
 yet it is so notorious and discer-
 nable, that I may justly conclude
 his Reason weak, if not blind,
 who

who does not discern it. The Cure then of this subtle Cheat must be by pursuing this Imposture into its secret recess, by seeing this Player before he put on his fine Cloaths and Disguises, by turning all our thoughts to God, and from our selves, adverting seriously and impartially to every little circumstance in the design that is to be considered.

I have oft-times admired the prevalency of Custom above Reason; and tho' Brutes, who want Reason, or Children, in whom it is yet scarce ripened, be led by it; yet what a strange thing is it, that in men who have Reason in maturity, Custom becomes not only a second Nature, but overcomes Nature, and is a second Nature, because it almost extirpates Reason, which was our first Nature. For tho' the older we grow, our Reason should grow the stronger, yet it falls still weaker, and melts
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so before Custom, that even the vertuous and dutiful Actions we do, seem rather the effects of Custom than of Reason. For if they proceeded from Reason, the same Reason which prompted us to do them, would oblige us to act vertuously on all other occasions. And we see that we alter our Vertues as the Fashions and Customs of our Count change. But to conclude this expostulation, I cannot but wonder that a man should be call'd reasonable, after he has trusted the making Laws and Moulds for living happily and dutifully to the Multitude or Crowd, the worst of all Judges; and which we our selves contemn as an ignorant, giddy, and capricious Rabble.

Of which influence of Custom over Reason, many different Causes occur to me; for sometimes I think that Customs establish and fix themselves in us whilst we are yet

yet young, that Reason can neither defend it self nor us, especially as to unusual Pleasures, which are the proper and natural objects of our first years: and like Weeds that have over-grown the ground, tho' never so fertile, they hinder the better Plants from growing up. To prevent which, it is necessary that we teach young ones to reason very early, and accustom them to a Christian Logic, that is better than what they can learn in the Schools. Thus we may make Custom it self useful rather than hurtful to Reason, and teach it to serve, whereas now it governs. And I know one who cur'd his habitual Swearing by arguing with himself, That since even the King's Enemies were able to restrain themselves from speaking Treason, by reflecting on its dangerous consequences, it was strange, that he who was convinc'd that Swearing did

did draw on more dangerous consequences, could not abstain from a custom that was altogether hateful, without the least allay of pleasure or advantage, to which the others might pretend.

Sometimes I think, that Custom having the force of the Multitude which supports it, they all concur to pull back a well resolved Man from his virtuous resolutions; and Custom prevails rather by numbers than by strength: And to prevent this, it is necessary for a man who resolves to Reason justly, to withdraw for some time from the Crowd: *Prov. 18. 1. A man says Solomon, having seperated himself, meddleth withall Wisdom; and Seneca tells us, That sanabimur modo à cætu separemur.* Jesus Christ also who has triumphed over the World, is by strong Intercessions, to be called in against this potent Enemy, who has shewn us, that he can
throw

throw out and dispossess that Devil whose name is Legion: but the Multitude is never so corrupt, but that still some are to be found who can assist us in reasoning justly upon things; and we should also remember, that we value so little the Multitude, that we stand not in awe of what they say of us, when we are gaining Money, or satisfying our Pleasures: why then should we still spend all we have, and deny our selves all Pleasure in following Custom, or courting Fame; since Custom and Fame are but the Dictates of the Multitude, an Homage which unthinking men are forced to pay the Rabble, because they dare not seriously reflect on what they do? Or which designing men pay them in hopes to make them first Tools to their Ambition, and thereafter Slaves to their Tyranny.

But at other times the strength of Custom flows from our laziness, who

who love the way that is chalked out to us, and think it safe to follow, rather than lead the crowd; cheated to this by a cowardly Humility, which proves our never having considered the Nobleness of our own Origine: Which is to be cured by a generous resolution of despising difficulties; and of being Slaves, as all persons are, who love better to obey, than to examine the Dictates of others; and we are most unreasonable, when we have so strong desires to lead the Multitude to our ruine, as in seditious Tumults and Factions; and yet will be content to be tamely led by them in what is much nobler and of greater consequence. How much more do we praise those great Legislators, who govern'd the Multitude by their Vertues, than those Sy-cophants who adored them by submissions? There is Light in Vertue and Religion, and there
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is none dares resist it ; it is able to astonish as well as convince : nor are men so wicked as not to desire to be assisted by some happy Genius, in what they are convinced is best. And every man almost stands only in awe of another, expecting and wishing some *Moses* to undertake their delivery.

Generally Self-love seems to lead into these Sentiments, as thinking the Multitude will cry up their own inclinations, and is unwilling to check that Multitude from which it expects applause ; and whose many Suffrages it needs to maintain it, against that inward sense it has of its own weakness and silliness : and this is to be cured by a noble reflection upon the dignity of our first Creation ; and a desire to be again like to that God whose Image at first we were, and whose Sons we may yet be, if we can raise our hopes above those lower Spheres of sensual Joys

Joys and Pleasures which poyson us when they seem sweet, and cheat us when they appear great.

One of the dreadful effects of our following the Example of others, is, that we think it is sufficient to be as reasonable as they: And thus we foolish and unreasonable Mortals, stint and bound one anothers goodness; now this we shall easily perceive to be most unreasonable, when we consider that no Man will satisfie himself in being as powerful or rich as his Neighbours; tho' these be much less desireable for a Soul and Spirit, which is the Image of an Infinite God, and is, after all its best endeavours here, very far from attaining to that degree of perfection which is even requisite to the life of a Christian. Devotion is a Race, and who is it that when he runs with many Rivals, will content himself to

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be in the throng, especially if the Prize be considerable: And therefore the Apostle exhorts us to *forget those things which are behind, and to reach forth to those things that are before, pressing towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus,* Phil. 3. 14. We are not only obliged to press on to obtain the Crown, but being pursued by our spiritual Enemies, we are concerned to use all the speed that is possible. And would not we conclude him mad, who if he were pursu'd for his life, would not desire to be past all danger, but content himself that he were not the last amongst those who endeavoured to escape?

It is strange, that notwithstanding that Custom does so lead us when we go not where we ought to go, but where others have gone before us, yet we oft-times err to a contrary extreme,
and

and by a contrary reason, which is as false and more dangerous than the other, reasoning weakly and falsely from a design and desire to be singular, and consequently to be admir'd; thus even whilst in this we oppose the multitude, we design to please them too; for no man admires what does not delight him; and probably, these same contradictors would have chosen rather to have gone to Fame in the beaten path, by a direct pleasing and following of them; but finding a Crowd before them in it, which they could not pass by, they, by a long and a dangerous circuit, run before, and endeavour to keep the Pass on their Rivals, and hinder them from coming up at Fame; and tho' they want the multitude at present, yet they hope to make them follow, else they would not differ from them; for few would care to continue

alone till the last, tho' they love to be singular at first ; yet this humour is a very great Enemy to true Reasoning, for it introduces a habit of arguing falsely ; and it is difficult in this dark estate to recover our road ; if we once quit our light, one errour emboldens us to commit another, and it is the punishment of it when committed ; even those who care not to oppose Truth, love to be consequential in their opposition ; for to do otherwise, were to be guilty of a double and more palpable vice in reasoning.

Another great hinderance to right Reasoning, is Sensuality : For though I am far from being of their opinion, who think the Soul nothing but the Animal Spirits ; since we cannot conceive how matters can think so delicately and subtilly, yet there is no doubt but the tempers of the
Body

Body has great influence on the Mind ; and that Sobriety does purifie the Blood, and make these animal Spirits fitter Organs for the Soul ; as on the other hand, Drunkenness drowns it, Gluttony stupifies it, and even after that time has dissipated those loads which oppress the Soul, there remains a Rock of dregs which are easily inflam'd into Lust, Rage, and other brutal Passions, which in a more lasting manner inflave it. Therefore Pagans have recommended Sobriety as a Diet for the Soul as well as the Body, and the Scripture Fasting, as a Religious Duty ; and since there is none of us so Brutal, but if we were about to Preach, Plead, or assist in a publick Judicature, we would be careful to avoid all these Excesses, lest thereby our Reason might be disturbed or clouded ; we ought much more to shun them, with

an Eye to the service of an Infinite God, and the preservation of our immortal Souls, minding in this the observation of the Prophet, *Wine, and new wine take away the heart*; and the advice of our Saviour, *See that you be not overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness*.

There remain yet two vigorous Enemies to our Reason to be subdued, Bigotry and Raillery; which tho' they be contrary to one another; Bigotry treating things that are ridiculous as Sacred, and Raillery treating things Sacred as ridiculous, yet they both conspire against our Reason, and are the favourite extravagancies of the times, which obliges me to insist the more upon them.

I define Bigotry to be a laying too much stress upon any circumstantial point of Religion or Worship, and the making all other essential Duties subservient thereto,
and

and got its name from an occasion
extravagant like it self. *Rolland* first
Duke of *Normandy*, be-
ing obliged to do ho- *Du Lange verb.*
mage to *Charles* King *Bigot.*
of *France*, for that *Dutchy*, refus'd
to kiss his Foot, except the King
would raise it himself to his
mouth; and when it was told him
that the Solemnity consisted in his
taking up the King's Foot and kis-
sing it, he answer'd, *Ne se begot*,
that is to say in old *Norman*,
Not so by God; Whereupon the
King and Court derided him, and
the *Normans* were from that oc-
casion called Bigots, as they who
adhered pertinaciously to Ridicu-
lous Extravagancies. These latter
Ages having, in this dotage of the
World, produc'd multitudes, who
mistaking Reformation for Hu-
mour, and seeing some Devout
Men admired for separating from
Idolatrous and superstitious Chur-
ches, because they would not

reform great and fundamental Errours, imagined that every thing was to be struck at with the same zeal which these shewed in matters of greatest consequence, and by a farther effect of the same zeal, they proceeded to force others to concur with them in their extravagancies, which surprising distraction forced Men to bestow on them the name of Bigots; Superstition could not so well agree to them, that being only an excessive Worship paid to a Deity, true or false, from an ill-grounded fear of mischief from it: nor could dogmatizing serve, that being only a positiveness in any Opinion, joyned to the vanity of thinking, that the Dogmatizer had right to dictate to others; nor Opiniarity, because that consists only in adhering too stiffly to any Opinion in spite of the best Reasons; nor Schism, because it

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is an unnecessary separation ; nor Hereſie, for tho' it is an obſtinate Errour in ſome important point, yet it is always in matters of Faith ; whereas Bigotry reſts only in matters of ſmall importance ; but tho' Bigotry properly relates to matters Eccleſiaſtical in our late acceptation, yet it is by an eaſie ſtretch uſed to expreſs opiniatrities of all kinds ; and if we conſider its original, we muſt conclude, that it has been drawn to matters Eccleſiaſtick, and is appropriated now to them, becauſe they are the moſt remarkable and frequent inſtances or effects of this miſchievous Principle. For we may juſtly ſay, that Bigotry is the Hypochondriaciſm of Reaſon, the Bedlam of Religion, and the Ape of Infallibility.

Instances of this Bigotry, as they are very frequent, ſo they are very ancient. The Apoſtles

themselves were forc'd very early to inveigh against Zeal that was not according to Knowledge; and the chief of their Scholars, who had been so happy as to hear them preach, did yet rend the Church by a dreadful Schism, which soon after grew to that heighth, that the Western Church excommunicated the Eastern, for differing from them in the observation of *Easter*.

The best way to deter Men from spending their time and zeal in the service of Bigotry, either as its Chaplains, or as its Emissaries or Executions, will be to consider the great defects, under which it labours, and the sad effects which it produceth.

The first pernicious effect of Bigotry, is, that it abtrudes on us things of no moment as matters of the greatest importance. Now, as it would be a great defect in a Man's sense to take a
 Star

Star for the Sun ; or in an Oratour to insist tenaciously on a point which deserved no consideration ; so it must be a much greater error in a Christian to prefer, or even to equal a meer circumstance to the solid points of Religion.

But these mistakes become more dangerous, by inducing their Votaries to believe, that because they are Orthodox in these matters, they are the only People of God, and all who joyn not are Aliens to the Commonwealth of *Israel*: And from this springs first, that they, as Friends of God, may be familiar with him, and, as Friends do one to another, may speak to him without distance or premeditation ; thence it is that we hear dreadful nonsense insolently vented in extemporary Prayers, such as would induce one to think that they do not believe him to be a God X

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X and in almost all written ones.

to whom they shew so little respect; for who can think that Infinite Wisdom can consider them as Friends, who dare address to him so unsuitably? Bigotry having thus corrupted our reasoning in matters of Religion, it easily depraves it in the whole course of our Morals and Politicks.

The Bigots in the Second place proceed to fancy, that they who differ from them are Enemies to God, because they differ from God's People; and then the Old Testament is consulted for expressions denouncing Vengeance against them: All Murders become Sacrifices by the Example of *Phineas* and *Ehud*; all Rapines are hallowed by the *Israelites* borrowing the Ear-rings of the *Egyptians*; and Rebellions have an hundred forc'd Texts of Scripture brought to patronise them. But I oftentimes wonder where they find Precedents in the Old Testa-

Testament for Murdering and Robbing Mens Reputations, or for lying so impudently for what they think the good Old Cause; which God foreseeing, has commanded us not to lie, even for his sake.

The Third link of this Chain, is, That they fancying themselves to be the only *Israel*, conclude that God sees no sin in them, all is allowable to them; and (as one of themselves said) *They will be as good to God another way.*

The Fourth is, That such as differ from them are Bastards, and not the true Sons of God, and therefore they ought to have no share of this Earth, or its Government; hence flow these holy and useful Maxims, Dominion is founded in Grace, and the Saints have the only right to govern the Earth; which being once upon an occasion earnestly
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press'd in *Cromwel's* little Parliament, it was answered by the President of his Council, That the Saints deserved all things, but that Publick Employment was such a drudgery that it would be unjust to condemn the Saints to it, and that the securest way to make the Commonwealth happy, was to leave them in a pious retirement, interceding for the Nation at the Throne of Grace.

The Fifth Errour in their reasoning, is, That seeing their opinions flow immediately from Heaven, no earthly Government can condemn any thing they do, in prosecution of these their Opinions; thence it is that they raise Seditions & Rebellions without any scruple of Conscience, and believing themselves the Darlings & Friends of God, they think themselves above Kings, who are
only

only their Servants and Executioners,

It may seem strange, that such Principles as Bigotry suggests should be able to produce so strange effects, and many fanciful persons pretend it to be from God, because it prevails so. But this wonder will be much lessen'd if we consider first, That the greatest part of Mankind are weak or dishonest, and both these support Bigotry with all their might. Many virtuous Men also promote its Interest from a mistaken good nature, and vain Men from a design of gaining Popularity. These who are oblig'd by the Government joyn their Forces with it, to make to themselves a Party; and those who are naturally unquiet or factious, find in it a pleasant divertisement; whereas on the other side, few are so concern'd for Moderation and Truth as
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the Bigots are for their belov'd Conceits.

There is also a tinsel Devotion in it which dazles the Eyes of unthinking People ; and this arises either from the new Zeal, that like Youth, is still vigorous, and has not as yet spent it self so as that it needs to languish ; or else, from the Bigot's being conscious that his Opinions need to be disguis'd under this hypocritical Mask.

Severity also encreases the number and Zeal of Bigots. Humane Nature inclines us wisely to that pity which we may one day need ; and few pardon the Severity of a Magistrate, because they know not where it may stop. I have known also some very serious Men, who have concluded, that since Magistrates have not oftentimes in other things a great concern for Devotion, their forwardness against these Errours must

must arise either from the cruelty of their temper, or from some hid design of carrying on a particular Interest, very different from, and oft-times inconsistent with the Religious Zeal they pretend. And generally, the Vulgar believe that all Superiours are inclin'd to triumph over those who are subjected to them; many have also a secret perswasion that the Magistrates are still in League with the National Church, and its Hierachy, which they suspect to be supported by them, because it maintains their Interest, and they are apt to consider Churchmen but as Pensioners, and so as Partizans to the Civil Magistrate.

Many are drawn into the esteem of such Opinions as they see Men suffer difficulties for. But this mistake was foreseen by the Primitive Church, who therefore declared that *non Pena, sed Causa*

Causa facit Martyrem. Christian Prudence does not allow a Man to sell his precious Life for an incompetent Price; Forwardness that way does not always recommend an Opinion: Men of all Perswasions have died with firmness; Pagans, yea, Women for their Country or Husbands have shewed a courage beyond any of these Bigots or Enthusiasts. The History of *China* relates a notable Instance of fantastical Bigotry; an Hundred Thousand *Chineses*, who had born tamely their Nation's being enslav'd by the *Tartars*, without making any Effort to recover their Liberty, chose rather to dye than conform to the *Tartars*, in turning up their Mustaches after their Mode; Vanity well disguis'd can flatter Men with the Glory of Martyrdom; and its observable that this Firmness faints often where Executions are Private;

Private; however, this should prevail with a Wise Magistrate, never to make Religious Opinions Criminal.

The true Cures then of this Disease seem to be, First, to endeavour to plant Reason early and carefully in the Hearts of Young ones, or to recover it in those of more advanced Years; for this is a more solid and effectual way, than the immediate opposing, or offering to cure this Imperfection it self, will prove; Men love their old and familiar Acquaintance; Traveling abroad conduces much to this Cure; for such as converse only with those of their own Perswasion, are daily warm'd into new degrees of Zeal; whereas, when we see that Men of true sense differ from us, we will be inclin'd from a Christian Modesty and Humility, first to doubt our own Opinions, and then to hear Instructions.

structions: The Orthodox Clergy should by their Pious Lives conduce to this Cure; and even Laicks should, by their serious and Devout Conversation, convince them that Sincerity and Piety are not inseparable from such humorous Conceits. These poor deluded People should consider what Mischiefs and Desolations those *Vulcanos* of Zeal have brought upon this Island by their dreadful Eruptions; their being but very few Families, in which some of their Children have not been sacrificed to this *Moloch*: Nor can our Navies or Armies secure us while this Enemy lodgeth within us, and is cherished by us. They should also consider, that Religious Reason left to it self will at last overcome those prejudices, which, like Meteors, may shine for a time, but will at last vanish into the common and undistinguish'd Air.

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But the best of all Remedies, is, to consider seriously the Doctrine and Practice of our Blessed Saviour (to form our Reason by which is the great design of this Essay) and therefore they should remember, that our Saviour foreseeing the inconsequentialness of their Actions, did observe, that they did start at Straws, and swallow Camels ; that they tithed the Mint and Annise, but forgot the great things of the Law. Our Saviour's reasoning in the Parable of the Publican and Pharisee, should humble all spiritual Pride ; and his humble and submissive Form of Prayer should bridle the indiscretion of all rude Addressers ; He suffered not the Sons of *Zebedee* to call for Fire from Heaven, that he might thereby instruct the World how unsuitable their Zeal was to his Gospel ; he reasoned against fighting *Peter*, that if his

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Kingdom were of this Earth, his Servants would fight for him; and if he needed any Assistance, he might call for Legions of Angels: Nor can I think, after this Instance, our Saviour would have trusted *Peter*, in his absence, with two Swords, since he was so forward in his own presence, when he had but one: But if others will be so blind as not to follow our Saviour's way of reasoning, let us at least follow it, in praying for them, because they know not what they are doing; yet I wish both they and we would consider, that we resemble too much at this time the unhappy *Jews*, who, by fighting amongst themselves, for small matters, relating to their Religious Rites, occasioned their being totally destroyed, and extirpated by the *Romans* who besieged them.

I know no greater enemy to just thoughts or Reasoning than Raillery and Satyrs, and the new way of reasoning by ridiculous Similies. Most Men are so famous for this kind of arguing, and do by it confute and baffle so much all who oppose it, that it passes for the stronger way of Reasoning, Victory being still accounted the Effect as well as the Reward of strength: But yet this way looks so sillie to Men when they retire and are alone, that they begin to wonder what it was that pleas'd them so before they left the conversation. And therefore I think it worth my pains to search a little into the causes of this vulgar error, why Men are so much pleased with raillery, and why it prevails so in the World at this day?

The first cause of this, in my opinion, is, that Men naturally love Truth, as the Eyes do Light,
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or Bruits Food; for Truth is indeed the Light and Food of the Soul; yet missing it, after much enquiry, and a passionate search, they doeither conclude there is none, and so laugh at all others who seek it, or in revenge, condemn it as a Cheat; and this breeds at first Raillery and Satyrs; even as we see, that when Gallants are rebuked by a severe Mistress, they please or revenge themselves in railing at her, or treating her in ridicule. As States-men and Courtiers seldom fail, when thrown off, to use the Court and Employments from which they are fall'n, after the same manner. And since too few seek after Truth it self, naked and unrewarded; others again weary of the toils and severity required in true reasoning; rest on this, as the easiest; even as Men content themselves with gilded Plate, when they cannot attain

attain to true Gold ; and Raillery has become by this as ordinary as the false Jewels, with which so many now please themselves, instead of true ones ; and at a distance, and on the publick Theatre, even of business, the one appears brisker than the other.

Raillery pleases also mens Self-love better than Truth ; for Truth is too severe to flatter our Vanity, and too honest to serve our Revenge ; whereas Raillery does tempt the Jester to flatter himself, and is an ordinary occasion for others to flatter him as a formidable Wit : nor can the World find so fit a Tool for Revenge as Raillery ; since few durst even for fear of checks of Conscience stab their Neighbour, or for Honour wound him when his back is turn'd, if it were not in a pleasant jest, which makes Malice pass for Wit, and cheats the Satyrists into a belief that they

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design not to wrong him, but to please the company : The Hearers also would hate such Enemies to Mankind, if they were not so ravish'd with the way, that they had not time to think on the Malice. This misfortune also attends it, that it tempts men to do or say many things on which they would not otherwise adventure; presuming that their Wit, which is so much admir'd, will also fright or bribe others from accusing or punishing them.

Truth is a sober and equal Pleasure, free from all transports and hating them, and so seems dull and flat to young and warm Spirits; whereas that passion which accompanies Raillery, either in Joy or Revenge, is more vigorous and elevated; and it is indeed a wonder to think what force and energy there is in the Soul, when the Sails of its Imagination are filled with the prosperous gale of Ap-

Applause, and by what secret springs the Fancy is able to raise it to such heights when it is warmly pleas'd; or what infinite numbers of ravishing Images appear to a strong Fancy: And how it creates so many pleasant notions out of other Mens Infirmities: And what great variety and newness it constantly produces, forming always various Scenes of Joy, to the wonder even of sober men: I deny not, but some do from good Nature, and to please the Conversation, scoff and jest, and, as I said formerly, some seeing it so much admir'd, think it is truly good, it being a kind of modesty, to believe that good which pleases others; and some seeing Victory attend it, think it is the strongest way of arguing; and, thus this Weed rises and spreads, and we sit with delight under the refreshing shades; and with these raptures of Malice or Pleasure,

Scoffers are so much taken, that they have not the leisure to think on what they ought to do, or even on what they are doing; and thus they forget frequently the duty they owe to great men, to whom they have access, and can hardly keep themselves within that moderation in Conversation, Eating, Drinking, and other Exercises that are requisite for preserving Health and Quiet, or for observing the Rules of Decency and Discretion: I conclude, that Jestings and Satyrs are so far from being a relaxation of Spirit to those who are wearied with serious Employments, as is pretended, that they are oft-times rather a new and studied toil, and most of these extravagancies could scarce be pardoned; like bitter and sour Fruits which can hardly be eaten, except when confectioned with great care and expence. But if we look further
into

into the matter, we shall find that nothing wrongs more both Reason and Piety, and is more destructive to true Friendship, or more inconsistent with Sincerity.

For clearing whereof we may observe, that every Faculty of the Soul contributes in a peculiar way to our reasoning: the Judgment does bring solid Arguments, the Memory Instances, Examples, and Citations, the Fancy or Imagination beautifies rather than illuminates its Objects with Similies, Metaphors, and other Rhetorical Figures; so that Raillery neglecting the other two, sports it self lightly amidst those Flowers, without minding the great business; and I have observed, that few who have been once bewitched with this way, ever minded any other. This suffers them not to penetrate further than the outside of things, and so it is impossible, that they who use it as their con-

stant divertisement, can have any deep thoughts, or can search into the bottom of Affairs.

I have also observed, that Railery arises oft-times from an undervaluing of all persons and things, and nothing can be more contrary to Religion or Government than this is. To Religion, because, when a Man contemns all that God has created, he undervalues what the Almighty himself was pleased with, and rejoiced in, and scorns those great Exemplars of Piety and Devotion, whom God has called his Friends, and men after his own heart; and so in effect he concludes, that God (blessed be his holy Name) made not good choice, and knew not how to value men a-right. And therefore I stand astonish'd to hear Ballads against *Moses* and *David* so much admir'd by such as confess there is a God, that the Scriptures are his Dictates,
and

and they the Pen-men of these Scriptures, and so Secretaries to God : Nor do such Scoffers make good States-men ; for none are such, save they who from a Principle of Conviction and Perswasion , manage publick Affairs to the advantage of those who employ them : Whereas they who believe that nothing is worth their pains, can never do any thing with affection and vigour ; and since they care not for the things themselves, and scorn such as employ them, they must never care for what Events attend them. Have we not seen some of these great Wits prove the worst of all States-men in our own days ? and as far below the mean-ness in management as they were above the wisest in Wit and Sharpness, What Friends also these prove is sufficiently understood to those whom they have lost for a Jest, after all the ser-

vices they could have done them: And it is very observable, that if Three or Four of them be in a Room, they who remain after such Conversations will fall on him who is gone with all the malice imaginable; & we very seldom see two such Wits true Friends.

I shall end these Reflections with this Addition, that generally Satyrs are made up of Impiety, Malice or Baudery; the First, unworthy of a Christian; the Second, of a Gentleman; and the last, of a sober Man; and in which Railers have Atheists for their Masters, satyirical Wasps for their Comrades, and oft-times Fools and mad Men for their Superious. Unhappy Men who do things that they must be asham'd of, and whereof the pleasure is lessen'd in the present time by checks of Conscience, and grows bitter afterwards by fear of Torments; a quality

quality our Saviour never countenanc'd, which his Favourites have ever zealously decry'd, in which Buffoons and Players have exceeded the greatest Kings, the most Renowned Hero's, and the Wisest men ; a cowardly extravagancy which ever attacks the Weak, and a merciless humour which triumphs over the Unfortunate ; upon which accounts all men make it their Interest to expose the Scoffer, as finding in his Ruine their own Self-defence ; and because they know he cannot be pleased except they be miserable, therefore they conclude, that they cannot be secured till he be humbled.

I design not by this to lessen the esteem due to true Wit, and that pleasantness in conversation which arises from it as Flowers do from the Root. The Almighty certainly design'd to make all men happy, and there is no hap-

piness

*yet as called the Jews, a nation of
Vipers.*

piness without pleasure; and as
 he rejoyced, when he saw that
 all that he had made was good,
 so he was desirous that Man might
 find out this good, both for ma-
 king himself thereby happy, and
 for inviting him the more to
 magnify the Creator, and there-
 fore to sweeten the miseries which
 naturally imbitter humane Life:
 God has illuminated some with a
 pleasantness of humour, which
 rejoyces the Society into which
 they come, as the Sun illuminates
 the Room into which it enters;
 these are they who having peace
 of Conscience at home, are there-
 by allowed to be glad; and who
 having Wit, employ it in turning
 the right side of things to them,
 understanding as well to find out
 what is pleasant in any Object as
 Artists do to find a Mine of Gold
 in a barren Mountain. This is
 the true use of Wit; and if at
 any time they use it to treat
 Vice.

Vice or Extravagancy in ridicule; it is not from Malice to the Person, but from desire to reform him, and Mankind by him. There is a justice in Scourging, Defaming, and Banishing Vice; and this Jurisdiction is given by Heaven immediately to such as have sense; of whom, upon that account, the greatest Rulers stand in awe; and so much reverence is due to them, that the rest of Mankind bestow applause according to their inclinations: Bitterness then, and sullen Moroseness in Wit is the tyranny of this Jurisdiction: If it be insolent, it is but the wrong side of this delicate Picture, a flashing Light, which at first dazles but thereafter blinds; a delicious Fruit corrupted into bitterness, and a beautiful Face wrinkled by fretting humours.

The Ancients term'd Wit a Salt; and that is not fit for Food, but for Seasoning; it may be us'd plentifully

fully in Conversation, moderately in Business, but never in Religion.

They who enter into a Faction do not properly reason weakly: but desert reason altogether, as one does who leaves his own to go into another Country, wherof the Laws Customs and Language are different. The design and center of Faction is to drive on such a Project, and adhere to those who prosecute it. And therefore nothing must be allow'd or argu'd but with respect to these. Hence it is that in vain you reason with them; for one may transubstantiate as soon as convert them, all that their Friends say is unanswerable, and they contemn and scorn what is said by their Adversaries when they cannot answer it; there is no crime they dare not commit, for the Guilt seems but small when divided amongst so many bearers; they warm themselves by clubbing into a kind of belief, & they vote themselves into a shadow
of

of Infallibility; whilst they cry out against others as Slaves to the Government, they become really Slaves to the Faction, their Liveries and Chains being seen by all, except themselves; but the great Salary with which their Bondage is to be rewarded, is Applause from their Friends, or it may be the Mob, to whom naturally their Appeal lies, and the getting into the Government, where they will be abhorred for practising every thing they formerly decry'd, and so have that reputation for which they toil'd, blasted by their own old Arguments; this extravagancy is in itself so unacceptable to all devout & reasonable men, that it is forc'd to use Railery to baffle Religion by Bigotry, and Reason by Railery; and I believe that Faction was the first introducer of the one into the Church, and of the other into the State.

My

My chiefeſt wiſh then ſhall be,
 that God who has ennobled me
 with right Reaſon, may make me
 happy in the right uſe of it ; that
 I may neither ſell it for Money,
 nor barter it for Fame ; and that
 it may never be dazled by the
 ſhining brightneſs of Favour, nor
 clouded by the black ſhaddows of
 Fear ; and tho' the portion be-
 ſtowed upon me be very ſmall,
 that yet I may employ that one
 precious Talent ſo, as that I may
 have from my Glorious Maſter
 that only deſirable Character,
Well done, good and faithful ſer-
vant ; thou haſt been faithful in a
few things, enter thou into the joy
of thy Lord, Matth. 25. 23.

F I N I S.

Pearson

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